The Story of the Church

The Baptists

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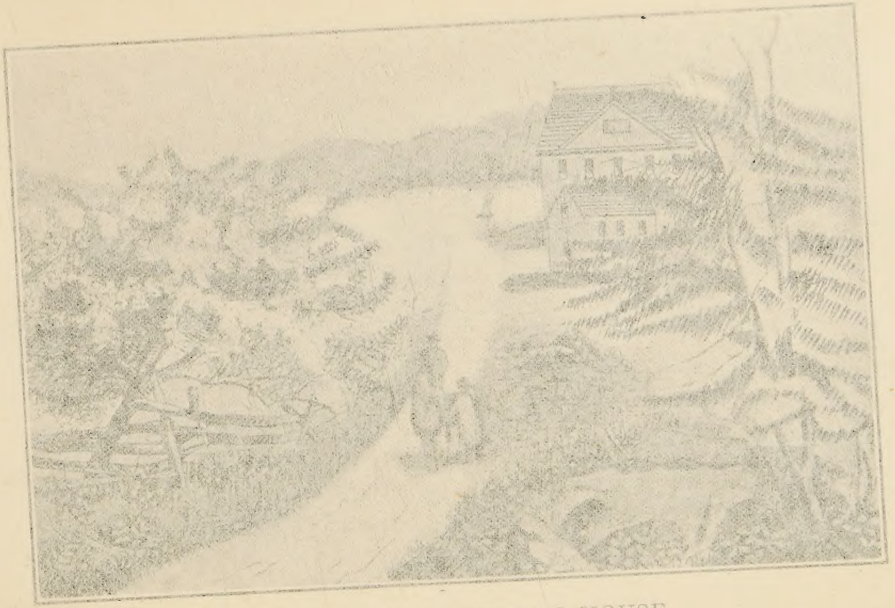
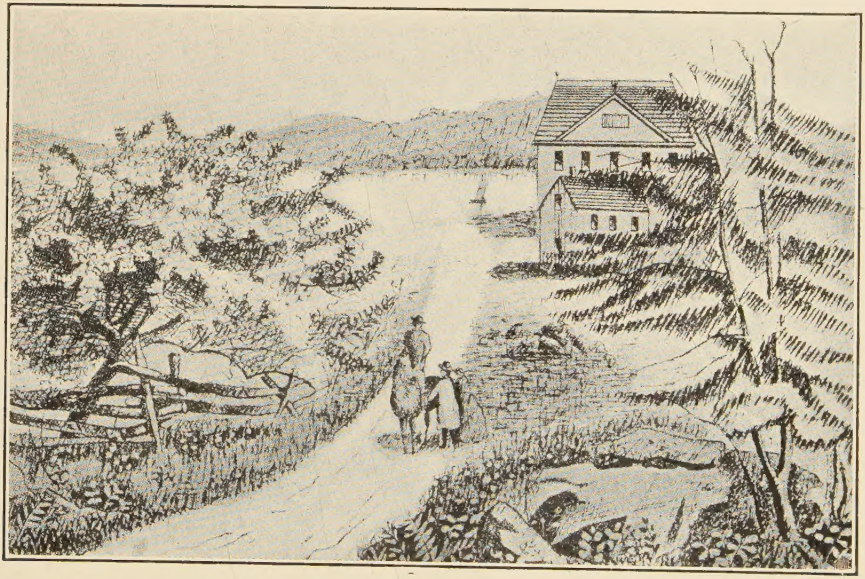
THE BAPTISTS



FIRST BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE,

Situated on Back St. (now Salem St.), near the Mill Pond, Boston, 1679–1771.

(From Rev. Pow-ell's "View of Boston.")



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The Story of the Churches

The Baptists

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The aim of this series is to furnish a uniform set of church histories, brief but complete, and designed to instruct the average church member in the origin, development, and history of the various denominations. Many church histories have been issued for all denominations, but they have usually been volumes of such size as to discourage any but students of church history. Each volume of this series, all of which will be written by leading historians of the various denominations, will not only interest the members of the denomination about which it is written, but will prove interesting to members of other denominations as well who wish to learn something of their fellow workers. The volumes will be bound uniformly, and when the series is complete will make a most valuable history of the Christian church.

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The Baptists

CHAPTER I

WHO AND WHAT ARE THE BAPTISTS?

KNOWLEDGE of the Baptists, even among well-informed people, is often confined to a single fact—they are a religious body that practice immersion. This is, to be sure, accurate knowledge as far as it goes, but it goes a very little way. It does not serve to distinguish Baptists from many other denominations. Not a few persons will hear with surprise that there are in the United States, besides the Baptists, at least ten religious bodies—some of them quite numerous—that uniformly practice immersion, and three others that practice it frequently. While it is true that the administration of

this rite has been the most striking characteristic of Baptists, from the time that they appeared as a separate people, early in the seventeenth century, they have from the first held a distinctive group of doctrines. To understand these is a necessary preliminary to a comprehension of their history.

The cardinal, the fundamental principle of Baptists is loyal obedience to Jesus Christ. This they conceive to be the essence of Christianity. To be a Christian is not to have had a certain "experience," not to believe a certain creed, not to perform a prescribed round of rites and observances, but to obey Christ. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Baptists therefore decline to recognize the distinctions sometimes made between "essentials" and "non-essentials" among Christ's commands. They hold every command to be essential, in the place and for the purpose commanded. And they deny the right of any human authority to abrogate or alter

any command that Christ gave to his disciples to be observed for all time.

Because of the authority thus recognized in Jesus Christ, Baptists receive the Scriptures—the written word of Christ—as the sole and sufficient rule of faith and practice. No special theory of inspiration has acceptance among them; they are committed to no views of the authorship and dates of the various books, and are free to accept the ultimate conclusions of sound scholarship. Their thought has never been better put than in the Philadelphia Confession—which is practically identical with the confession of the English Baptist Assembly of 1689, which again is the Westminster Confession slightly revised: "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the holy Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by a new revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of

men." All creeds, all writings of the Fathers, all decisions of councils, are the opinions of fallible men, which must stand or fall as they agree with the Scriptures. The only authority to interpret these writings is the Spirit of God, promised to every believer that asks for his enlightening. It is not merely the privilege, it is the duty, of every Christian to interpret the Scriptures for himself; no one can relieve him from this responsibility, none should be suffered to rob him of this right.

Because they accept the Scriptures as an authoritative guide, Baptists hold that a church of Christ consists of those, and of those only, who have been baptized upon a credible profession of faith, and walk consistently in accord with such profession. They find no warrant, express or implied, in the New Testament for the baptism of infants. There is confessedly no command to baptize infants. Candid scholars, not Baptists, admit that there is no clear case of

infant baptism in apostolic times. But more than this: Baptists hold that the baptism of any but believers is contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity, and that it totally subverts the principle on which the Church of Christ was founded. Judaism had been based upon natural descent, upon the law of the flesh, but Jesus came to teach and establish the utterly new law of the spirit. "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." To be a Christian is to enter into a new and spiritual relation to God, through faith in his Son.

This is to exalt the spiritual above the fleshly in Christ's Church, to put reality above form. It marks the sharp break between the religion of Christ and all other religions. In every other religion one has certain rights because of natural birth—the Jew, for example, was a Jew because he was a lineal

descendant of Abraham. But no man is a Christian because his parents were Christians, he can be a Christian only if he has been spiritually born into the kingdom of God. Religion thus becomes, according to Christ's teaching, a matter between each human soul and God. There is no need of priestly mediation, there is no possibility of regeneration by a magical "sacrament." To baptize one who has not believed is, in the eye of a Baptist, an empty form, but as the act of one who sees in it more than that, it is something worse: it is an impertinent interference with the personal rights of another soul, it is to nullify the fundamental principle of the gospel of Christ.

Because they accept the Scriptures and not tradition as authority, Baptists practice immersion only as baptism. No candid scholarship to-day professes to find anything but immersion in the New Testament, or in the practice of the Church for centuries. One great branch of the Catho-

lic Church—the Greek—to this day recognizes no other practice. The old polemic literature of baptism is out of date and useless, and this is equally true of both sides of the controversy. Those who do not practice immersion have shifted their ground. They no longer deny, they rather frankly admit, that immersion was the apostolic practice and long continued to be the general, if not the universal, rule of the Church. But, they plead, "other times, other manners." Christianity is a spiritual religion, and its followers are not in bondage to a rite, however ancient and expressive. In the wise exercise of discretion, the Church has seen fit to change the ancient form to one more suited to modern ideas, dress, customs. It is a triumph of good sense over narrow literalism! Baptists have found themselves unable to acquiesce in such a triumph; they hold fast to the command of Christ and the example of his apostles.

For a like reason, Baptists teach that the second Christian rite, the Lord's supper or eucharist, was instituted for the followers of Christ alone, that is, those who have believed in him and confessed their faith in baptism. The New Testament writings make this mutual relation plain, in regarding baptism as the beginning of the new life in Christ, the symbol of regeneration, while the supper is the symbol of the union of the believer with Christ, and the sustentation of the new life in him. This teaching of the Scriptures is so plain, so perfectly unmistakable, that for fifteen centuries, among all the vagaries of the swarming heretical sects, none ever proposed that the unbaptized should be admitted to the eucharist. It was reserved for Faustus Socinus first to teach that baptism is not necessary to Christian discipleship, that men may enter the church of Christ and enjoy all its privileges without baptism, but are under obligation to observe the eucharist.

Even at the present day, however, no denomination in its official standards authorizes the invitation of the unbaptized to the table of the Lord. What is known as "open" communion is the attempt—sometimes deliberate, but more often unconscious—to set aside, for considerations of sentiment, the historical consensus of Christendom as to the teaching of the New Testament upon this rite.

In the matter of church polity, Baptists also attempt to take the New Testament as their guide, and to follow the simplicity of apostolic times. In the apostolic period, the believers of any locality formed an assembly or church. There were no officers in these churches, except elders or bishops, and deacons. Each church enjoyed an absolute autonomy, and no external authority existed. In cases of need, a church called on others for help, and the other churches recognized their obligation to render aid. In doubt and difficulty a church asked ad-

vice, and the other churches acknowledged their duty to give counsel. All believers, in every place and in all time, are sometimes spoken of as constituting one assembly or church; but this is an ideal, not an actual body. The idea of one universal visible Church, with local branches here and there, is a conception foreign to the New Testament, the gradual evolution of the second and third centuries. So Baptists understand the Scriptures and history, and they shape their polity accordingly.

Because the religion of Christ is a strictly personal matter—a transaction between the soul and God, into which no third party can enter—Baptists hold that a State Church is an absurdity, as well as an intolerable wrong. God himself, by giving man freedom of choice, has put it beyond the scope of omnipotence to coerce men into his kingdom. Why should man attempt what is beyond the power of God? Absurdity could no further go. Nor can any wrong

be more intolerable than interference with that most sacred of all rights, the right of each man to decide for himself what shall be his relation to God. To worship God according to one's own conscience, rather than according to another's, is the right men are least willing to surrender. But an established religion, a State Church, is a flat denial of that right. It cannot be anything else. True, under a State Church there may be toleration of all sects, but by what principle does one man "tolerate" another in the exercise and enjoyment of that which is the equal right of both? He who tolerates, because that is expedient, in so doing silently asserts the right to persecute, if that shall become expedient. For a long time Baptists were the only religious body to recognize these truths, to stand fast for equal religious liberty as the heritage of all men, and therefore to agitate for complete separation between Church and State. All America has come to agree with them, and

the whole world is moving toward the same goal.

It will be seen, therefore, that Baptists came to hold just these doctrines and no others by no mere accident. These principles are a logical whole, necessary corollaries of the fundamental tenet of loyalty to Christ and obedience to his word. Not one of them is superfluous, nor is it easy to suggest an addition. These are the principles that Baptists came into existence to maintain; it is these principles that justify their continued existence. They are vitally important, and they are held and consistently enforced in practice by no other body.

When Baptists came into existence as a separate people has been a hotly debated question. The answer depends mainly on the definition of the name. If by Baptist is meant a people called by that title, and holding in all important respects just the doctrines held by Baptist churches to-day, then

it is vain to seek for such before the seventeenth century. But if by Baptist were meant any mediæval sect that agreed with present-day Baptists in the fundamental matter of baptizing believers only, while practicing that form of baptism in common use about them (affusion), it would be possible to carry the history of Baptists back to the twelfth century, perhaps earlier still. No little confusion and dispute has been caused by this looser use of the name, and in this book it has seemed best therefore to confine the name to its well-established historic sense, as describing an offshoot of the English Separatists, who first achieved an independent existence early in the seventeenth century, adopted the exclusive practice of immersion, and in consequence received the name Baptists about 1644.

The earliest historians of the Baptists had learned the facts about the origin of their denomination, and set them forth properly. Later writers, who had made little or no in-

vestigation, and had not even read the earlier historians carefully, inspired by denominational pride and anxious to make good a claim of Baptists to antiquity, attempted to carry back the history to the earliest Christian times. It is now an article of faith, among the Baptists of a certain large region of the United States, that there have been churches of their order from the days of the apostles until now, and woe to him who denies a dogma none the less binding because it is unwritten. The holders of this new theory rely less on historic evidence than on exegesis for proof—which is wise, for facts are lacking, but exegesis is easily supplied. For example: Christ said that the gates of Hades should not prevail against his Church; but the churches of the New Testament times are such as Baptist churches are to-day, and no others; hence, if there had ever been a time when Baptist churches did not exist, the gates of Hades would have prevailed and Christ's promise

would have lacked fulfilment. But that is unthinkable by a Christian—heaven and earth shall pass away, but not the word of Christ—hence there must always have been Baptist churches in existence.—Q. E. D.

This method of treating Baptist history is not only recent and provincial, but is opposed to the fundamental conception of the older writers. They attached no such importance to the proof of antiquity. They appealed for justification of teaching and practice, not to any traceable outward descent from the apostles, but to actual correspondence with the New Testament—the only kind of apostolic succession they esteemed worth having. They also recognized the fact that if antiquity be made the test of truth, Rome has the judgment in her favor rendered in advance. On every account, therefore, they forebore factitious and ridiculous claims to an ancient origin, and, though often taunted with being a

people of yesterday, they contented themselves with replying that their principles were the oldest form of the Christian faith.

All students of history are to-day trained in the rigorous application of the scientific method. And what the ordinary lay reader wishes to know of any religious body is, What are the well ascertained facts?—facts established by documents of indubitable genuineness, facts witnessed by competent contemporary observers. To answer this question candidly and succinctly, so far as it relates to the Baptists, is the object of the succeeding pages. It will there be shown that a succession of principles, like those held by the Baptist churches of to-day, may be easily traced from the twelfth century onward to our own times. The tracing of these principles is a necessary and legitimate part of the history, for though Baptists are of late origin, they did not spring out of the ground and invent *de novo* the type of

doctrine and practice associated with their name. Their roots go back many centuries before their definite origin and formal organization.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS OF THE BAPTISTS

THE immediate spiritual ancestors of the Baptists were the Mennonites, whose name was derived from a Roman Catholic priest, Menno Simons, who left the Roman Church about the year 1536 and became an independent evangelistic teacher. He had been led to this course, in part by persistent doubts concerning the teachings of the Church, but still more by his long and careful study of the Scriptures, in which he finally became well versed. He did not originate the doctrines and practices of the sect that came to bear his name, nor did he found the sect, but as the most prominent of its leaders he came in time to hold a place not less influential than that of founder. He at least refounded the body,

drawing together a scattered and disorganized people, and winning thousands of new converts.

The fundamental principle of the Mennonites was that the Scriptures alone are to be received as authority, and for Christian practice only the New Testament is authoritative. It was plain to them that the Scriptures teach the baptism of believers only, and contain no warrant, whether of precept or example, for the baptism of infants. It did not appear equally plain to them that baptism is immersion only, and for the most part they have always been content with practicing that form of baptism in vogue about them. To this rule there have been a few exceptions. A congregation at Rhynsburg introduced the practice of immersion in 1619, and a branch of the Mennonites that settled in Russia also became immersionists. The great majority, however, are affusionists to this day.

A curious people, in many ways, were

these followers of Menno. A tendency to over-literal interpretation of the Scriptures early manifested itself among them, and led to the adoption of some practices that later became distinguishing features of the followers of George Fox. They forbade all oaths, even judicial oaths, and refused to bear arms, even in self-defence. They enforced plainness of dress and general nonconformity to worldly customs, and in their church discipline they supervised the details of business, family and personal conduct to a degree that most folk would reckon tyrannous as well as inquisitorial. That, notwithstanding these peculiarities, they were a mild, peace-loving, law-abiding, industrious, virtuous people, is the reluctant yet admiring testimony of their bitterest foes and persecutors.

These virtues, and the simplicity of their teaching, won favor for the Mennonites through a large part of the Continent of Europe. Throughout Holland, Denmark,

Germany and Western Russia, Menno and his fellow-missionaries went, amid constant privations and dangers, preaching the gospel and everywhere baptizing converts. Only the most stringent measures of repression kept the sect from making rapid growth in every place. In Holland, where alone they enjoyed a fair measure of toleration, they did increase to the number of many thousands. But for the most part, their history is to be traced by the records of bloody martyrdoms, with which the archives of those times abound. Many of these records have been recovered and published, and the result is a story of patient endurance of wrong, of heroic perseverance in the face of certain anguish and death, such as may indeed be paralleled but cannot be surpassed in all the history of Christianity.

From time to time, companies of these Mennonites found their way to England. We find traces of them early in the reign of

Henry VIII, and these continue throughout the Tudor dynasty. The sect may be traced by the royal proclamations in which their errors were denounced, and by the records of their arrest and punishment. It was the policy at times of the Tudor monarchs to encourage immigration from Holland, for the building up of certain English manufactures; and such immigrants, dwelling in certain specified towns, were permitted to enjoy their own religious customs, with little or no molestation. With these exceptions, Mennonites who came to England were likely to find that they had gone further and fared worse.

In England, these people were seldom or never called Mennonites, but Anabaptists. They remained, to all appearance, a separate people, not making any considerable impression on the English. We know from the official records that some men and women of English birth joined the sect, but there is no trustworthy account of Ana-

baptist churches composed of Englishmen during this period. Of the individual English Anabaptists known to us, the most noteworthy is Joan Boucher, or Joan of Kent, who was burned for heresy in 1550, the story of whose martyrdom is known to all readers of Fox's "Book of Martyrs." The last man to suffer at the stake in England, Edward Wightman, who was burned in 1611, was also an Anabaptist. At least, the two chief errors alleged against him were denial of the Trinity, and of the baptism of infants. The first tenet was by no means characteristic of Anabaptists, but was held by a few who had been influenced by the writings of Socinus. Between Joan of Kent and Wightman many witnessed to the truth with their lives, to say nothing of those still larger numbers that suffered the minor penalties of fines and imprisonment, whippings and banishment. But even though these Anabaptists, speaking a foreign tongue and dwelling clannishly by them-

selves, did not make converts of Englishmen on any great scale, and apparently left no English churches of their order, their sojourn in England was not without effect upon that country. They certainly did something toward preparing the soil, and to some extent they sowed the seed, for the later growth of English Baptists.

It has already been said that Menno did not originate the sect that took his name. There were Mennonites before Menno, but they had been called Anabaptists. He found ready to his hand, though disorganized and scattered, a people already holding and practicing what he had by his studies discovered to be the teaching of the Scriptures. Indeed, we are told that it was the constancy of one of their number when persecuted for his faith, even to the death, which had been one of the chief means of opening his own eyes and promoting his complete enlightenment. It was after he had become a preacher of the truth that the

Anabaptists rallied under his leadership, and under the new name renewed their existence, which had been threatened with extinction. For these Anabaptists were the most hated and despised and bitterly persecuted folk of the Reformation period, with what reason the reader shall judge when he has read their history and teachings.

The Anabaptists appear in the early years of the Reformation, almost simultaneously in both Germany and Switzerland—appear with a suddenness, and in so many places at once, as to compel the conclusion that they too (like the Mennonites) were not then and there originated, but are the reappearance of an older party under a new name. One difficulty in studying their history is due to the fact that contemporary writers used the name "Anabaptist" very loosely, it having become a term of contumely, and as such was applied to persons to whom it did not properly belong—to

anybody whom the dominant religious party esteemed dangerous heretics or pestilent fellows.

The Anabaptists do not appear as a separate party in the first stages of the Reformation, but this is sufficiently explained by the fact that the reformers at first professed strictly evangelical and radical ideals and purposes. The refusal of Luther, particularly from the Leipzig disputation of the summer of 1519, to accept anything but the Scriptures as authority in either faith or practice, was all that the most radical evangelical asked or desired. He only demanded the faithful, the consistent application of this principle to all questions, as they arose in turn and demanded solution. Zwingli also, from the very beginning of the reform at Zürich — long before the citizens were aware that the reform had begun, in fact—had avowed the same principle again and again, in the strongest possible words. Both reformers spoke most

explicitly in favor of the rights of the individual conscience, the universal priesthood of believers, the duty of each Christian to interpret the Scriptures for himself, and Luther at least had denounced the wickedness of persecution for the sake of religion. Here was doctrine as radical as the Anabaptists ever proclaimed. How were those who really held these as cardinal beliefs to know that the reformers only half held them—held them only in the strictly modified sense, that nobody else was to go further and faster than they in the practical application of these principles? As the real meaning of the reformers became clear, the Anabaptists stood forth as a separate party.

This is especially true of the reform in Switzerland. In the first public disputation at Zürich (January 29, 1523), which marks the formal beginning of the reform movement, the council ordered that the disputants should "use the holy divine word in the German tongue and speech," and

promised that the decision should be "according to what shall prove itself to be consonant with Holy Scripture and truth." Throughout the discussion Zwingli refused, with the approval of the council and his auditors, to listen to any argument not founded on the Scriptures. Although his chief opponent, Faber, was very anxious to quote Fathers and councils against Zwingli's doctrines, he could not oppose them by the text of Scripture; and the council therefore decided that Zwingli had won the victory, and ordered him to go on proclaiming the pure gospel. The people of Zürich generally approved this decision—there were no dissidents save those inclined still to adhere to the Roman Church.

Already the question had been raised in Zürich whether the Scriptures justified the baptism of infants. Zwingli, Oekolampadius, and others prominent among the reformers, recognized that no direct command or clear precedent can be cited from

the New Testament for this traditional practice, and they were much inclined at first to give up a custom so ill supported. But before they had fully decided on their course, difficulties arose. The radical group at Zürich insisted not merely on the surrender of infant baptism, but on the total reorganization of the church, in accord with the New Testament. There we find, said they, churches consisting only of believers, those who have not only made a sincere and credible profession of faith in Christ, but attest the profession to be true by a godly life.

This was an altogether different ideal from that cherished by Zwingli, who was a patriot as well as a Christian, not more preacher than he was politician. He did not believe it possible thus to separate the Church from the world, and it appeared to him suicidal to enter on a policy that, if successful, would certainly lose the reformers the support of the Zürich council. Reform, not by

the power of the truth alone, but by the authority of the government; a Church, not composed of the regenerate only, but of all the community who were not openly vicious and irreligious; a Church, not depending on voluntary gifts for its support, but supported by the State, and in some measure therefore controlled by the State; in short, a reform not purely religious, but in part political—this was the ideal of Zwingli and most of his coworkers.

Nor should it surprise us that they were not ready to accept the programme of the radicals. That was vague and not a little alarming, theirs was precise, definite and safe. There had been no demonstration as yet of the possibility of a Church dissociated from State support and State control. Voluntaryism seemed a frightful risk to a clergy accustomed to draw sure stipends from a well-filled treasury; it seemed a frightful certainty of disorder, heresy and trouble to the politician, accustomed to the legal regu-

lation of ecclesiastical affairs. And therefore, when it became clear to the reformers that there was a close and necessary connection between a State Church and infant baptism, Zwingli and the majority of his coworkers reconsidered the question, and without much difficulty found arguments from the Scriptures for the retention of infant baptism.

The radicals, however, not only held fast to their contention, but followed out the logic of their convictions. If they were right in maintaining that infant baptism was not warranted by the Scriptures, that it was therefore a void and meaningless form, what followed? Why, that they had never been baptized at all, and the command of Christ had not been obeyed by them. Obviously, if the only real baptism was a baptism of a believer, on his own confession of faith in Christ, it was their duty to confess him and be baptized at once. Early in 1525 such baptisms on

confession began among them, and in a short time all the radicals had submitted to this new baptism. The method employed in these first cases was affusion—it is distinctly recorded that persons were baptized from a basin or bowl. Later, in some cases, immersion was practiced; but while this method was more and more used, it seems never to have become an exclusive practice, as it did later in England. Nor did it become a cause of division or dispute.

It was because this group of radical reformers thus insisted on administering baptism, by whatever method, to adults who had (as all others believed) been baptized in infancy, that their opponents began to call them Anabaptists, or Wiedertäuffer, both of which mean *re*-baptizers. And it was because this act challenged not only the validity of their opponents' baptism, but the validity of their whole church order—in effect declaring the State Church to be no church—that severe measures of repression

were immediately undertaken. The Anabaptist henceforth was held to be not merely a heretic, but a rebel; he not only set up a practice different from that which satisfied others, but he questioned the authority of the council, and declared its measures wrong. It is not altogether wonderful that the Zürich authorities found this intolerable.

The leaders of the Anabaptists in Zürich were a group of men well worthy to be compared with Zwingli himself. They were such men as Conrad Grebel, son of a Zürich councillor, educated at the Universities of Vienna and Paris, greatly esteemed for his ability and learning; Felix Mantz, the natural son of a Zürich canon, also liberally educated and a fine Hebrew scholar, which Zwingli was not; George Blaurock, a former monk, less famed for learning than for eloquence, in which he was unsurpassed; Ludwig Hätzer, from the canton of St. Gall, educated at Freiburg,

also an eminent Hebrew scholar. These men were fully the equals of Zwingli in learning and eloquence, some of them were his superiors in social position, but the chief preacher of Zürich and the trusted adviser of the council was stronger than all of them. Public disputations were appointed by the council for the discussion of the points at issue, and were duly held, but the result was, under the circumstances, a foregone conclusion—no matter what the relative skill of the disputants, or the strength of the various arguments adduced, the decision of the council was certain to be in Zwingli's favor. And such a decision having been rendered, it was equally certain that the council would, that the council must, proceed to enforce it upon the defeated party. With the ideas prevalent in that age, religious liberty, toleration even of opponents, was not to be thought of by the powerful or looked for by the weak. Repression by heavy penalties, in the last

resort by death itself, was the policy immediately pursued by the council.

These penalties were mainly directed against the men prominent as leaders among the Anabaptists. The greater part of these people, as of the Zwinglians, were plain men and women, of good intentions but of little education. The expectation no doubt was that, when the Anabaptists were once deprived of their able and educated leaders, they would be easily controlled. In Zürich, at least, the policy was measurably successful. The leaders soon disappeared. Several—Felix Mantz, Jacob Falk, Henry Riemann—were put to death by drowning; others—as George Blaurock and Ludwig Hätzer—escaped, only to meet a worse fate elsewhere. Perhaps the ablest of all, Conrad Grebel, died of the plague. After 1530, traces of the Anabaptists in Zürich are scant and soon disappear altogether. In some of the other cantons, equal success followed similar measures.

In Bern, however, the Anabaptists proved to be made of sterner stuff. The death penalty was not inflicted here, but everything short of this was tried, with little or no effect. Persecutions continued for nearly or quite two centuries, and in spite of the fact that large numbers sought more peaceful homes elsewhere, the Anabaptists have survived in this canton until this day. A conference of eight churches, and several unattached congregations besides, testify to their devotion to the truth and constancy in upholding it. One party of them, now known as the New Baptists, separated from the rest about 1830, and practice immersion; the rest are, and seemingly have been from the beginning, affusionists. Otherwise, these churches preserve essentially unchanged their original doctrines and practices.

What these were we learn from the confessions issued from time to time by little groups of Swiss Anabaptists, especially one

adopted at Schleitheim in 1527. This teaches the baptism of believers only, the breaking of bread by those alone who have been so baptized, and a strict discipline; it forbids Christians to be magistrates, or to take oaths of any kind or to bear arms. Not all the Swiss Anabaptists held to these last tenets, but as to the first group they were unanimous. None of the confessions or extant writings of this sect declare for any special form of administering baptism—while they differed somewhat on the question, it never seems to have been discussed, or to have constituted a point of difference between them and other Christians of their day.

The Anabaptists of Germany have a history less clear and precise, and are a less homogeneous body. The earliest group to be called by that name—certain so-called prophets, who made a great commotion in the city of Zwickau, in 1520—were not, properly speaking, Anabaptists at all. They

probably gained this name from their opposition to infant baptism. They challenged Melanchthon and other reformers to prove infant baptism from the Scriptures, thereby putting that excellent scholar to much confusion. But from all we can learn of these "prophets" they rejected external sacraments altogether, and therefore could not be called Anabaptists. They rather agreed with the position taken later by George Fox and the Friends, than with any Anabaptist group of the sixteenth century. Thomas Münzer, for a time closely connected with these "prophets" and often called an Anabaptist, never belonged to that party. He wrote a tract, about 1523, in which he denied that infant baptism is found in the Scriptures, but his opinion remained a purely academic and private notion. He later issued a liturgy in German, which contains a form for the baptism of children, and he never abandoned the practice.

The true Anabaptists appear in Germany a little later than this, simultaneously in most of the free cities. It has already been explained why they did not appear under this title in the very first stage of the Reformation. Great obscurity still hangs over the early development of the sect in Germany, but the points at which they appear are so numerous and so little connection is traceable between them, as to indicate a common cause. That is believed to be, the previous existence in the same regions of Waldensian communities, whose life was thus prolonged under the new name. No other hypothesis seems adequate to account for all the facts. But if this theory of a common origin be admitted as probable, it yet remains true that there were several groups of Anabaptists, differing very considerably in characteristics and doctrines, and these must be separately studied and estimated.

The Anabaptists of Southern Germany

and the adjacent region of Moravia were of the Swiss type. Their most prominent leader was Balthazar Hübmaier, who, before the Lutheran Reformation began, was a doctor of theology in the University of Ingolstadt, and later a distinguished preacher at Regensburg. In 1520 he became chief preacher at Waldshut, a town on the border of Switzerland but within the domains of Austria. Here he formed a close connection with the Swiss reformers, and, with the full approval of his townsmen, gradually introduced evangelical doctrine and practice. Further study of the Scriptures carried him beyond the position of the Swiss leaders; he rejected infant baptism, becoming involved in a warm controversy on the subject with both Zwingli and Oekolampadius; and in the spring of 1525 he became an Anabaptist, and rebaptized hundreds of the Waldshut people.

The Austrian government intervened, forcibly restored order in the town, and

Hübmaier was compelled to flee. He sought refuge in Zürich, but was arrested, imprisoned with rigor, and finally under torture a recantation was wrung from him —which, however, he repudiated when he was brought into the church to read it. A second recantation procured his release, and he made his way to Nicolsburg, in Moravia, where for a time toleration prevailed. There for two years he taught and wrote indefatigably. Fifteen tracts appeared from his pen during these two years, some of considerable length, and were widely circulated. The Anabaptists of Moravia grew to 12,000 or more in number. Even the lords of the region, the Princes Leonard and John Lichtenstein, were converted and baptized. But Austria now succeeded in extending her authority over Moravia, and toleration was at an end. Hübmaier was arrested, condemned for heresy and sedition, and burned at Vienna, March 10, 1528. After his death the Anabaptists of Moravia

were gradually suppressed or scattered by severe persecution.

Among the Anabaptists of South Germany another name was even more potent for a time than Hübmaier's—that of John Denck. Educated at Basel, he was an excellent classical and Hebrew scholar. Though he embraced the evangelical doctrines early in the Reformation, he soon developed considerable differences from the theology of the reformers, and thus involved himself in difficulties. He especially dissented from Luther's teaching on the bondage of the will, and justification by faith alone. In 1525 he became acquainted with Hübmaier and was led to join the Anabaptists, among whom he was speedily recognized as a leading spirit. For some time he was a resident of Augsburg, then a strong Anabaptist centre. When compelled to leave here, he became a wanderer and died at Basel in 1527, still a young man. He was of imposing presence, had a

fine voice, and was much esteemed for eloquence, as well as learning. The strongest tributes to his character and attainments come to us from his opponents. In theology he was a mystic, and while he is accused of some heresies, the only proved divergence from orthodoxy is his belief in the final restoration of all men to holiness. It is worthy of record here, perhaps, that the Augsburg Anabaptists practiced immersion in the river, as we learn from the testimony of a Benedictine monk who lived in Augsburg at the time. But while this was the usual practice, they also accepted affusion as a sufficient baptism in times of persecution, when the more public form was imprudent.

The Anabaptists of central Germany were to a considerable extent drawn into the movement known as the peasant's war. Many of them belonged to, or had sprung from, the ranks of the peasants, and sympathized with their grievances. The move-

ment was religio-social, as the well-known Twelve Articles of the peasants testify. Though Münzer—who became the leader of the peasants, and to whose blind fanaticism their downfall was largely due—was not himself an Anabaptist, he shared their beliefs to some extent and obtained much influence among them, with disastrous results to the body at large. For the German princes, having put down the insurrection, proceeded to severe persecution of all Anabaptists in their domains, having the plausible excuse that some of the sect had been engaged in rebellion and rapine.

There was also the Strasburg group of Anabaptists. This became the centre from which were propagated chiliastic doctrines that culminated in fanaticism and disaster. The most influential teacher of these ideas was Melchior Hofmann, a man of little education, active mind and restless spirit, who was specially drawn to the study of the prophetic Scriptures. He was at first iden-

tified with the Lutheran party, but in 1529 he settled at Strasburg and became an Anabaptist, quickly putting himself at the head of the sect in those parts. He had previously predicted the speedy ending of the age, and he now became more definite in his predictions. The second coming of Christ and the setting up of his kingdom on earth was to occur in the summer of 1533, and Strasburg itself was to be the New Jerusalem, the capital of the new kingdom. In May, shortly before the consummation was due, the authorities of the city arrested Hofmann and threw him into prison, where he remained until his death in 1543; but this persecution, and even the failure of the prediction, did little to lessen the fanaticism of his followers. It merely took a different course.

New leaders had to be found, and they were speedily forthcoming. In one of his missionary tours, Hofmann had gained as an adherent a baker of Haarlem, named

Jan Matthys. After the master's disappearance, this disciple came forward as a prophet, the Elijah of the new dispensation. Converts multiplied, and at this juncture something occurred in Germany that seemed to these misguided people a providential indication that the time had come for the setting up of the new kingdom. The city of Münster, in Westphalia, had rebelled against its prince-bishop, and become a Lutheran town. The leaders of this revolution had already shown symptoms of a most un-Lutheran radicalism, when Jan Matthys appeared in the town and began to proclaim his doctrine. The city was won by his prophetic outgivings, the people acknowledged him as leader, and many Anabaptists flocked in. The prince-bishop now raised an army and laid siege to the town. Matthys was killed in a sortie, whereupon John Bockhold, of Leyden, announced that he was the prophet of God and the successor of Matthys. He

was accepted at his own valuation, and shortly afterward proclaimed Münster to be Mount Zion and himself King David. Polygamy, community of goods, and many other absurd and revolting practices were introduced by this new David. At length, on June 25, 1535, the city was taken by assault, aided by the treachery of some within the gates; many of the rebels were put to the sword, others were reserved for a more cruel death by torture.

In these events only a few Anabaptists were concerned. Matthys and Bockhold had indeed confidently expected that the whole body would make common cause with them, but the sect as a whole were as much disgusted by the excesses at Münster as was the rest of Germany. Nevertheless, the fault of a few was made the pretext for unrelenting persecution of all who bore the name. Many thousands of them perished, and finally they disappeared from Germany; for, if any remained, they succeeded in con-

cealing all trace of their existence. The Protestant princes and towns must bear, equally with the Catholic, the infamy of these unjust, inhuman and un-Christian persecutions of a people who were, with few exceptions, peaceable and law-abiding, asking only the privilege of serving God according to their convictions of Scripture teaching.

How baptism was practiced among these Anabaptists we have little evidence. A confession issued during the Münster troubles distinctly prescribes immersion, but eye-witnesses have left record that the form actually used in the city was affusion. Somewhat later than this, from 1575 onward, we know that immersion was practiced by Anabaptists in Poland, as well as in the adjoining regions of Silesia, Lithuania, and Pomerania. They may have derived the practice from Swiss Anabaptists who found refuge among them—hitherto the generally accepted hypothesis—or from the

example of the Greek Church found throughout this region, and always practicing immersion exclusively. The probabilities are that affusion was extensively practiced among the German Anabaptists. Had the contrary been the case, the fact could hardly have escaped record.

There is reason to believe, as we have seen, that the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century are in part a continuation of an earlier evangelical party known as the Waldenses. This name is derived from Peter Waldo, a merchant of Lyons in the middle of the twelfth century. He became troubled about his spiritual state, and sought relief from various priests and theologians, for some time to no effect. Finally one said to him that the way of evangelical perfection was to be found in the words of Christ: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross and follow me."

He understood the command literally, and in literal obedience his soul first found peace. Making provision for his family, he gave away all his remaining wealth to the poor.

Waldo then gave himself to the study of the Scriptures, and employed two priests to translate the gospels and some other books from the Vulgate into the language then spoken in Southern France. The gospels especially he studied, until he could repeat almost the whole of them; and what he had learned he began to recite to others. One circumstance aided him in this work: it was a favorite diversion of his countrymen to listen to the tales recited by strolling minstrels, and they listened no less eagerly to the stories about Christ taken from the gospels. One of the oldest fragments of Provençal literature that has come down to us is the versified story of Christ, "The Noble Lesson," composed to be recited in this way—not by Waldo himself, but by some of his early followers.

By such teaching Waldo made converts, and to the more promising of these he taught the gospel stories, to be told by them to others. They all wore a simple dress, gave their goods to the poor, and followed Christ as well as they knew how. In short, Waldo attempted almost exactly the same thing as Francis of Assisi, some fifty years later. And like Francis he experienced the distrust and hostility of the clergy, who, as soon as they became aware of this work, attempted to stop it. The complaint of all the Catholic writers of the period against Waldo is that, a mere layman, he had usurped the office of the priesthood—without authority, without training, he presumed to preach. The Archbishop of Lyons finally inhibited Waldo and his followers, and he saw his work, already very successful, threatened with ruin. He adopted the same expedient that occurred to St. Francis a half century later, an appeal to the Pope. But while Francis, as we know, succeeded,

Waldo failed. Pope Alexander III received him kindly, and the third Vatican council, then in session, gave him and his companions a hearing; but on the whole he was treated with that scorn which those who esteem themselves learned and wise ever bestow on others whom they regard as pious but silly. The plea that he might continue his work, with the approval and blessing of the Church, was denied Waldo, and he was commanded to return home and not to preach without the consent of the bishop. This meant that he and his followers must give up the work to which they felt that God had called them, or to be treated as schismatics.

Up to this time Waldo had evidently believed himself to be a good Catholic. If there were any heresy in his teaching, he was totally unaware of it, and his appeal to the Pope shows his consciousness of orthodoxy as well as his respect for authority. That St. Francis would have ceased his

work if Pope Innocent III had finally withheld his approval, we cannot for a moment believe. Neither did Waldo hesitate; he must obey God rather than man. But from this time onward he and his followers were looked upon as disobedient to the Church, a body of schismatics, soon to be suspected of heresy also, and exposed to the severest censures of the Church so long as they remained contumacious. Persecution began at once, became bitter and relentless, and continued long. The Waldenses were scattered and driven into hiding, especially in the inaccessible valleys of the Alps, but all efforts to suppress them failed. They were the most dangerous, the most obstinate, the most persistent heretics with whom the Roman Church ever had to deal. On the Italian side of the Alps a remnant of them survived the persecutions of centuries, and the Waldenses of Piedmont are to-day an active and growing body.

It is difficult to state with exactness the

doctrine and practice of the Waldenses, for they were not a homogeneous party. Under that name, at different times and in various places, considerable divergencies are found. This is probably due, in part at least, to the fact that the name covered not only the immediate followers of Waldo, but survivals of preexisting sects, more or less evangelical, in Southern France and Northern Italy, some of which will be presently considered. A part of the Waldenses held quite evangelical views, rejecting infant baptism and sacramental grace, agreeing almost exactly with the beliefs held by the Anabaptists. Another part retained much more of Catholic doctrine, particularly belief in transubstantiation. A part were congregational in polity, a part had an elaborate system of teachers, priests and bishops. Those that penetrated to Switzerland and Germany seem to have been of the more evangelical type, as we learn from Catholic writers of that region. This fact

lends additional plausibility to the theory that they are the spiritual ancestors of the Anabaptists.

Among the evangelical sects that preceded the time of Waldo in Southern France, the most important was the Petrobrusians. Little is known of Peter of Bruys, the reputed founder of the sect, except that he began preaching early in the twelfth century and after some twenty years' labor was burned in 1126. That he obtained a large following—so large as greatly to alarm the Catholic Church—is disclosed by the literature of the period, especially by a treatise of the Abbot of Clugny, Peter the Venerable, the friend of Abelard. We find from this account of their heresies that the Petrobrusians rejected all tradition and human authority, accepting the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice. They said that baptism ought to be given only to such as have believed on Christ, for no one can be saved

by another's faith; they denied transubstantiation, the doctrine of purgatory and prayers for the dead; they affirmed that churches ought not to be built, and that crosses should be pulled down and destroyed. These teachings are essentially the same as those of the more evangelical among the Waldenses, and of the Anabaptists.

A contemporary of Peter of Bruys, who outlived him and carried on his work, was a former monk of Clugny, Henry of Lausanne. He was a preacher of fiery eloquence, and the extent of his following is reluctantly attested by Bernard of Clairvaux, in one of his letters regarding the religious condition of Southern France, where he made a preaching tour in 1147. The followers of this teacher were known for a time as Henricians, but did not long survive his death (about 1150), at least, under that title. The very rapid spread, a generation later, of the Waldenses in this same region

is tolerably good evidence that fragments of Petrobrusians and Henricians had survived, and lost their identity in the new party.

Even earlier than this there were parties that held some, if not all, of those evangelical beliefs whose history we have thus traced back to the twelfth century. Such were possibly the Arnoldists, though we know too little of their origin and teachings to speak with certainty. Even if they were followers of Arnold of Brescia, which is not established, we cannot be sure how far he taught evangelical doctrine. The only clear thing about Arnold is that he taught separation of the Church from the State. There is also a rumor that he was not sound concerning the sacrament of the altar and the baptism of infants. If the rumor were better accredited, we might put Arnold alongside of his contemporary, Peter of Bruys, as a teacher of evangelical truth. At present he is claimed by both Catholics

and Protestants, and neither have a clear case.

Better authenticated is the claim that, along with some theological vagaries, the sect known as Paulicians taught essentially those conceptions of gospel truth that we have found persisting among various parties from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries. The Paulicians originated not later than the seventh century, and under various names are found in Asia Minor and Eastern Europe down to the Reformation period. The Bogomils of Bulgaria and the Albigenses, of Southern France, appear to be offshoots from this stem. The Paulicians, according to their opponents, held a dualistic or Manichæan theology; and they rather denied the value of the outward sacraments, with the Friends, than agreed with the teaching and practice of the evangelical party of mediæval times.

Attempts to trace the history of these principles even further back, through sects

like the Donatists and Montanists, until we reach the times of the Apostles, are curious rather than valuable. The chain of continuity is, at best, broken at many points; proofs become more and more attenuated, and hypothesis must continually take the place of fact. Such studies have little or no historic value, and as for their polemic use, it is always bad tactics to assert in controversy what cannot be clearly proved. Until research supplies a larger and better authenticated body of fact—if that day shall ever come—it is better not to attempt tracing earlier than the twelfth century a continuous history of the formal principles held by the mediæval evangelical parties.

CHAPTER III

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE BAPTISTS

In the northwest corner of Lincolnshire, on the river Trent, is the old town of Gainsborough. Its history goes back to the time of Knut, and in the seventeenth century it had a population of about five thousand. Ten or twelve miles to the northwest, where the three counties of Nottingham, York and Lincoln intersect, is the village of Scrooby, then as now a hamlet of some two hundred souls. The eastern counties of England—Kent, Norfolk, Lincoln—were from early times the hotbed of heretical sects, and it was here that the first Separatist congregations were formed. The Separatists were that branch of the Puritan party who had come to the conclusion that the reformation of the Church of England was hopeless,

and that it was therefore the duty of all who desired a pure Church to come out from this body of corruption and establish Christ's Church on a wholly new foundation. The fundamental principle of the Separatist was that a Christian church should consist only of the regenerate.

The vicar of the church at Gainsborough at the beginning of the seventeenth century was the Rev. John Smyth, M. A., fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge. He distinguished himself for a time by his opposition to the Separatists, but was at length converted to their views, and about 1602 resigned his benefice to become the pastor or "teacher" of the Separatist flock at Gainsborough. People who lived at Scrooby and other neighboring villages also became members of this church, and traveled long distances to attend its meetings; but after three or four years Scrooby became a second meeting-place, and the congregation there had its own teachers.

William Bradford and William Brewster were influential members of this group from the first, and after a time John Robinson joined them as teacher.

Persecution became more and more sharp, and about 1606 Smyth and most of his Gainsborough people emigrated to Holland and settled at Amsterdam, where Smyth continued his ministry and at the same time supported himself by the practice of medicine. A year later the Scrooby group followed this example, but after a brief stay at Amsterdam settled at Leyden. It was this latter group, reinforced by others who had not left England, that some years later became the Pilgrims of Plymouth. We are at present, however, chiefly interested in the congregation at Amsterdam, under the pastoral care of John Smyth.

Up to this time it does not appear that Smyth had been familiar with the theology of Arminius, or with the belief and practice

of the Mennonites. Here at Amsterdam he would most naturally be brought to know both. His was always an eager and inquiring mind, and study of these new ideas soon led him to adopt them for his own. A tract called "The Character of the Beast," published in 1609, makes known his new convictions that infant baptism is not taught in the Scriptures, and that a church of Christ should consist not merely of the regenerate, but of such regenerate persons as have been baptized on their own confession of faith. There had been troubles among Smyth's followers before this, but the church was now led to withdraw fellowship from him.

Thirty-six members are said to have adhered to their pastor and accepted his views, among whom Thomas Helwys and John Murton or Morton were most prominent. Believing their former baptism null, it plainly became their duty to be baptized on confession of faith. Why, having come

to hold the beliefs of the Mennonites, they did not seek membership in the Mennonite churches is a question not easy to answer. There was no one else to baptize them; all, including Smyth himself, were in the same unbaptized condition. This proved to be no serious difficulty, however, for a cardinal doctrine of the Separatists was, that any body of faithful believers has the right and power, at any time and anywhere, to originate *de novo* a church of Christ—and if a church, then a ministry and the sacraments. Accordingly, Smyth baptized himself (whence he is often called in the literature of that time the Se-baptist), then Helwys and the rest, and they constituted themselves a new church.

Though this is the beginning of the body afterward known in England as the General Baptists (because they believed in a general atonement, that is, for all men), this was not a Baptist church, in the full meaning of that term. Smyth and his fol-

lowers practiced affusion. Of this we have positive evidence from the Mennonites of Amsterdam. For, after a short time, Smyth and some others separated from this new church and sought admission to the Mennonite body. The latter appointed a committee to investigate this application, and the report of this committee says: "We also inquired for the foundation and form of their baptism, and we have not found that there was any difference at all, neither in the one nor in the other thing." The meaning of this declaration is not doubtful, for in the literature of that time "form" of baptism is used as we now often say "mode" of baptism, to denote the character of the act. How the General Baptists afterward became immersionists will be related further on.

Smyth died in 1612, but a year before that event Helwys and Murton and some others returned to England and settled in London. Persecution was just then much relaxed,

and they seem to have suffered little or no inconvenience. Churches of the same order rapidly sprang up—in 1626 there were four others, in various counties: at Lincoln, Coventry (Warwick), Sarum (Wilts) and Tiverton (Devon). In 1644 a hostile writer says they had increased to forty-seven. Of these earlier churches, only two now claim an existence, Coventry and Tiverton, and there is no evidence to prove the continuity of the present churches in those towns with those established before 1626. The other English Baptist churches (a dozen or so) that claim an early origin, dating back in some cases as far as 1555, have no evidence whatever to produce, except some vague information that there was a congregation of sectaries, possibly Anabaptists, in the same locality at these early dates. No extant records go back beyond the middle of the sixteenth century, and most of these fanciful dates are of quite recent origin. Such churches might as reasonably claim

that they were founded by the Apostle Paul, A. D., 65.

The first congregation of Particular Baptists (called Particular because they were Calvinistic, and believed in a particular atonement that is, for the elect only) was formed in London in 1633. It was an offshoot of a Separatist congregation gathered in 1616, by Henry Jacob, in what was then the village of Southwark, on the opposite side of the Thames from old London. From the beginning some members of this church had scruples about the baptism of infants, and finally they asked for their dismission to form a separate congregation. Most of them at this time received "a new baptism," but it does not appear to have been immersion—it was "new" in the sense of a second baptism, this time administered on confession of faith. Soon after their organization, John Spilsbury was chosen to be their pastor. A few years later (1538) a second secession occurred from the original

church, on the same grounds, to join Spilsbury's flock, which by this and other accessions became large enough to be divided in 1640, William Kiffin heading the new colony. Spilsbury's church still survives in London as the Whitechapel, Commercial street, while that of Kiffin is known as the Devonshire square, Stoke-Newington.

In 1640 the original church became two by mutual consent; one division, remaining with P. Barebone, continued to be of the Independent or Congregational order, while the other, of which Henry Jessey was pastor, became the mother of at least two more Baptist churches. Some of this Jessey church not only had scruples about the baptism of infants, but had been convinced by the Scriptures that baptism ought to be by dipping the body in water. They were not aware that any Christians in England practiced such baptism of professed believers, though an occasional parson still immersed infants, but hearing that some in the Neth-

erlands so practiced, they sent one of their number, Richard Blount, who was duly immersed by John Batten, a teacher of the Collegiates at Leyden. Returning, Mr. Blount baptized Mr. Blacklock, another "teacher" of these people, these two baptized the rest, and so the first Baptist church, in the full acceptation of that term, was constituted, in the year 1641. Perhaps two churches were constituted, for these people had been meeting in two companies and purposed so to continue, and they may have counted themselves distinct bodies from that time. In 1645 Henry Jessey himself led another colony out to form still another Baptist church.

By 1644 there were seven congregations of this order in London, and they united in the publication of a Confession of Faith, in fifty articles. The object was to correct the misrepresentations scattered abroad by their opponents, and particularly the false and scandalous statements contained in

"The Dippers Dipt," by Dr. Daniel Featly, a member of the Westminster Assembly of divines, but not a Presbyterian. This is the first Confession to define baptism as "dipping or plunging the body under water." All the Particular Baptist churches had now definitely adopted this practice, not all in direct succession from Blount, but some merely appointed their pastor or one of their own number to administer the ordinance. As John Spilsbury put it, "Where there is a beginning, some must be first."

Just when and how the change began among the General Baptists is not recorded. Some hint is afforded us in the fact that during the decade from 1640 to 1650 correspondence between their churches and the Mennonites of Holland, which had previously been continuous and friendly, entirely ceased. Mennonite writers allege as the reason for this rupture the change from affusion to immersion by the English churches. No other hypothesis fits the

facts so well. We know, however, that the change of practice was gradual among the General Baptists, and that for some years there remained among them two parties, the Old Men or Aspersi and the New Men or Immersi. So late as 1653 we find several congregations in Lincolnshire that still affused, but rejected infant baptism, which was pronounced by other Baptists "a mere demi-reformation."

These proceedings were coincident with the greatest political and religious struggle that ever convulsed England. The same twelvemonth in which the first Baptist church was formed saw the meeting of the Long Parliament, the condemnation of Strafford and the imprisonment of Archbishop Laud. Had this change begun sooner, it is probable that a violent persecution would have followed; as it fell out, there was violent opposition but no persecution. The power to punish was gone, but the spirit of intolerance remained. This restoration of im-

mersion, which, though the ancient practice of the Church of England, had practically lapsed, might have been looked upon with comparative indifference by other Christians, had these new churches been content to practice immersion as one of the ways of administering baptism. But when they contended that immersion was not merely the preferable way of baptizing, but that immersion alone is baptism at all, the case was different. These churches were the first, so far as known, to maintain this as the teaching of Scripture. Other Christians before them had immersed, but none had refused to recognize any alternative act as constituting valid baptism.

Moreover, the churches gave practical effect to their new doctrine and practice in the most impressive way—they refused to hold communion with other churches, on the ground that Christians who had been affused only had not been baptized. "Baptism," says Article XXXIX of their Con-

fession, "is an ordinance of the New Testament, given by Christ, to be dispensed upon persons confessing faith, or that are made disciples, who upon profession of faith ought to be baptized, and after to partake of the Lord's supper." To be sure, this was no more than the common doctrine of Christians of all ages regarding the qualifications of communicants, from which Socinus and his followers alone had dissented; but the logical deduction from this and the new doctrine of baptism seemed to other Christians then, and has always seemed to them, harsh and invidious. It is a matter of sentiment rather than of logic, and whenever such a conflict occurs, logic commonly gets the worst of it.

These things were not done in a corner, but soon became widely known, and provoked a storm of protest, ridicule and denunciation. A cloud of pamphlets poured from the press, attacking or justifying the doctrine and practice of this new sect.

Two thousand titles of publications sent forth in little more than a generation, still extant and catalogued, testify to the great interest that was aroused about this matter. The name Baptist now first appears in English literature, to describe these new churches and the new practice, and after some hesitation was accepted by them as their official designation. They protested against the name Anabaptist as false and misleading, but the name Baptist, though not what they would have chosen, was comparatively unobjectionable. They did not deny that their doctrine and practice were in some sense "new" in England; they maintained, however, that both were as old as the New Testament and the churches founded by the apostles. And on that contention they were willing to rest their case.

In this pamphlet literature we find less than we might have reasonably expected about the Baptist practice of "close" communion. There are two reasons for this.

The first is, that the other sects of the Commonwealth period realized that the pinch of the argument was not at this point, but at the question of what constituted valid baptism; and so almost the whole controversy throughout the seventeenth century, was regarding the act of baptism and its proper subjects. A second reason is, that Baptists themselves were not entirely agreed on this subject of communion. Many of the earliest Baptist churches were like those whose history we have already treated, offshoots of Separatist congregations, and maintained the warmest relations with those from whom they had reluctantly and peaceably withdrawn. In this way, some Baptist churches from the first disregarded the strict logic of their position, and practiced intercommunion with any other Christians who desired their fellowship. The earliest controversies on the communion question are, therefore, between Baptists and Baptists, not between Baptists and non-Baptists.

In the struggle for liberty in which the English people were now engaged, the Baptists enlisted with all their soul. They had been advocates from the first of complete religious liberty—the only party in England during the seventeenth century, save perhaps the Friends, who understood what liberty meant. Others desired liberty for themselves, freedom from persecution for those who agreed with them, but had no notion whatever of granting even toleration to others. The Baptists maintained that it was wrong to persecute any for religious belief and practice, and denied the right of the civil power to interfere in any way with religion. A Confession of faith issued by John Smyth and his followers (1612?) is explicit on this point: "The magistrate, by virtue of his office, is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor to compel men to this or that form of religion or doctrine, but to leave the Christian religion to the free conscience

of every one, and to meddle only with political matters. . . . Christ alone is the king and lawgiver of the church and the conscience." And the Confession of 1644 declares: "And concerning the worship of God, there is but one lawgiver . . . which is Jesus Christ. . . . So it is the magistrate's duty to tender the liberty of men's consciences (which is the tenderest thing unto all conscientious men, and most dear unto them, without which all other liberties will not be worth the naming, much less the enjoying), and to protect all under them from all wrong, injury, oppression and molestation."

Cherishing such views as these, it is not remarkable that the Baptists were unanimous supporters of the Parliament in its struggle against the tyrannous misgovernment of Charles I. When Cromwell began to raise his "new model," many Baptists took service under him, and some of them rose to be his most trusted officers. To

one of them, Colonel Fleetwood, he gave a daughter in marriage, and another, Thomas Harrison, was his lieutenant-general. Others, though less conspicuous, rendered valuable services to the commonwealth, which were generously recognized. During the Protectorate, it is true, the devotion of these same officers notably cooled. Fleetwood became the head of army cabals against his chief, and Harrison fell into disgrace and was at one time committed to prison. The reason of this conduct on their part was that they suspected Cromwell, and with good reason, to be at the point of accepting the crown. The army was opposed to monarchy, and in favor of a republic, and it was this determined opposition that finally caused the rejection of the royal title by the actual head of the State.

It is the great merit of the Protector that, when he had attained absolute power, he not only shattered the spiritual despotism of the Stuart reigns, but that he steadfastly

refused to erect another despotism on its ruins. The Presbyterian party would gladly have set up a national Church, as rigidly exclusive and as bitterly persecuting as the old Church of England had been. They had conquered liberty for themselves, and now they were prepared to deny liberty to all others. To this Cromwell and his army would by no means consent. The Ironsides were not Presbyterians—a majority of these warriors were Independents and Baptists—and they had not fought to rid themselves of one yoke only to have another placed on their necks. The army and Parliament were therefore brought into sharp conflict over this question, and of the issue there could be no doubt. Parliament was not then forcibly dissolved, but it was "purged"; the rigid Presbyterian element was excluded, and the danger of the new spiritual tyranny was averted. Had their designs succeeded, it would have been a capital offence to profess the Unitarian faith

in England, while every Baptist would have been in danger of perpetual imprisonment.

When the supreme power devolved upon Cromwell, he established a system as closely approximating complete religious liberty as the sentiments of Englishmen in his time would permit. England was not ready for absolute liberty, which requires complete separation between the civil power and the Church, but it received for a time a curiously composite ecclesiastical system. A commission of Triers was appointed to visit the parishes of the kingdom and see that they were supplied with qualified ministers. Doctrinal tests were prohibited, the only qualifications required being piety and competence. The character of the public religious services was left to each incumbent. Several Baptists were among these Triers, and it is known that many Baptist ministers accepted benefices at this time—a course not easy to reconcile

with their teaching, both before and afterward.

Not because of such favors from the State, but because they were for a time given complete liberty to proclaim their faith to all who would hear, Baptists made rapid progress. At the Restoration, in 1660, the General Baptists alone claimed a membership of 20,000; and while they may have grown more rapidly than the Particular wing, and also had an earlier start, there must have been several thousands of the latter. But the return of Charles II to the throne of his fathers made a great change in their condition and prospects. True, he had promised in advance his consent to whatever measure of religious toleration his Parliaments should propose, and was well inclined to grant immunities to all Dissenters that he might protect some (the Roman Catholics, to whom, at heart, he belonged); but his Parliaments would not hear to anything of the kind. By a series of severe

statutes, they attempted to suppress all forms of worship not in accord with the prayer-book of the Church of England,—which was promptly restored, with a few changes, to its former place of honor and authority.

These statutes entirely failed of their main object, the suppression of Dissent, but they did make the lot of Dissenters hard, and greatly impeded the progress of all the unauthorized sects. The heaviest restrictions were placed upon the preachers of the Dissenting bodies. One act forbade any of these to approach nearer than five miles to any incorporated town or borough in the kingdom. By thus confining these preachers to the country districts, it was doubtless hoped to prevent their access to their people—that they might incidentally perish of starvation or exposure was no concern of Parliament. Another act made all religious gatherings outside of the parish churches illegal, and heavily punished any

householder who permitted more than three persons not belonging to his own family to attend a religious service under his roof. Dissenters were disqualified for any office of honor, trust or profit under the crown, or in any incorporated town or borough—though it must be confessed that the object of this restriction was the exclusion from office of Roman Catholics rather than of Protestant Nonconformists. This is proved by the fact that scores of the latter occasionally communed at the parish churches, and obtained certificates from the clergy, in order to qualify themselves for office, and none objected to the practice save the more scrupulous among the Dissenters themselves.

The Baptist preachers suffered severely under these unjust laws, many of them being punished by frequent imprisonments and fines. Many of their preachers, if not most of them, had some secular calling, in which they were successful and prosperous;

a few had made what were for those times considerable fortunes in trade. This, on the one hand, gained for them powerful friends and some immunity, so that they were less liable to imprisonment than others less fortunate; while on the other hand, their very wealth exposed them the more frequently to prosecutions that could only be settled by the payment of large fines. Rich or poor, therefore, the Baptist preacher must suffer for his faith, if not in person then in estate.

One of the best known cases is that of John Bunyan, the author of "The Pilgrim's Progress." He was pastor of a church at Bedford, composed of both Baptists and Independents, and for preaching to them he was arrested and thrown into prison three times, his confinement lasting, with brief intervals, nearly thirteen years. He might have obtained his liberty at almost any time by promising to abstain from preaching, and giving surety (easily found) for his good behavior. This pledge he could not

give. He could suffer for his Lord, but he could not deny him. For the world this imprisonment was a great gain, for it was while in this "den" that Bunyan dreamed his dream of Christian and his pilgrimage from the city of Destruction to the Heavenly City, and wrote it down for the delectation of all generations to follow. It is one of the marvels of literature that this poor tinker, with almost no education beyond mere reading and writing, with no library save his Bible, never having travelled beyond the limits of England and having lived a very narrow life in his own country, should have been able to produce a book that is marked by so great knowledge of men and so exquisite literary art—a book as much admired by the lovers of pure literature as praised by the seekers after true piety. Less known, but hardly less meritorious, are his "Grace Abounding," the spiritual autobiography of Bunyan, and the "Holy War," an allegory under which a

typical Puritan "conversion" is described as the losing and recapture of the town of Mansoul. The quality of these books testifies that Bunyan's success was no accident, but that he was the great prose artist of Puritanism, as Milton was its great artist in verse.

The reign of James II saw a considerable relaxation in the treatment of Dissenters in England. Charles II had been a Romanist at heart, but his brother and successor was a Romanist in fact. He naturally used his royal power to protect and favor his fellow-religionists, and it was this policy that finally cost him his throne. The immediate result was a general softening of the penal laws, not by their repeal or formal modification, but in their enforcement. Even Protestant judges and prosecutors and constables were not insensible to royal favors and royal frowns. Besides, the English people had come to a more tolerant mind and spirit as regarded the Protestant Dis-

senters, and were not averse to modification of the law in their favor, though they wished the modification to be made lawfully. James took advantage of this feeling, and had he been a man of tact and discretion he might have gained substantial privileges for the Roman Catholics also. But he chose to pursue his policy by reviving one of the most odious prerogatives claimed by Charles I, and asserting the superiority of the crown over Parliament and the law. He issued a royal proclamation of dispensation, by which the penal laws against the Dissenters were suspended, and the officers of the law were warned to take no further proceedings.

Thus by one act the king had contrived to arouse against himself the slumbering religious prejudices of Englishmen, always quick to detect anything that smacked of Popery, and at the same time the resentment of every patriot. It was a masterstroke of folly, of which only a Stuart

would have been capable. If his proclamation remained in force, all that had been won by the people in their great struggle against Charles I had been lost, and their liberties and property were again at the mercy of a despotic monarch. There could be only one ending to such a strife as that upon which James entered so lightly, for he lived too late and was too weak a ruler to enforce a despotic policy. The loss of kingdom and crown was but a little delayed. The revolution that placed William of Orange on the throne involved the resettling of the constitution, and a fresh extension of liberty. And that necessitated recognition of the fact that a religious despotism could no longer be maintained in England—toleration at least must be granted to those who differed from the majority in matters of religion, but were loyal to king and law. There might still be a religion by law established, a Church protected and fostered by the State; but liberty to with-

draw from that Church and worship God as their consciences dictated, must now be conceded to all who could not conscientiously go with the majority.

The Act of Toleration of 1689 is rightly regarded as one of the foremost constitutional statutes, the third of the great charters of English liberty, standing next to the Petition of Right and Magna Charta. It relieved Baptists forever from the fear of punishment for fidelity to their religious convictions. If it did not bestow upon them and other Dissenters complete religious liberty—nothing but Disestablishment could do that—it did leave them measurably free to work out their own destiny. It was, at any rate, a guarantee that henceforth they should not be molested in person and property for the sake of religion. And that the Baptists at once felt the inspiration of this hope is evident. In the same year that the act was passed, an Assembly was held in London representing the Particular

churches, at which a new confession was adopted. With the object of emphasizing as far as possible the things on which they agreed with other Christians, the Assembly took the Westminster Confession almost entire and made it their own, introducing changes in a few chapters only, and these such as were absolutely necessary to state accurately the views of Baptists regarding the church, the sacraments and the function of the civil magistrate. Less than fifty years had passed since the organization of the first Baptist church. Churches of that faith were now scattered throughout England, and their members were counted by thousands. There was every prospect before them of rapid and continuous growth.

What kind of people were these Baptists? Mostly plain folk of the middle class, though a few of the gentry were found among them, and not a few of their first ministers were men educated in the universities. In what may be called their

church life, their religious customs, they differed considerably from Baptists of today. Many of the peculiarities that we have come to associate with the Society of Friends were found in these churches; indeed, a large part of George Fox's first societies were composed of those who had been Baptists, and much of the life and discipline of the Friends was derived from this source. Baptists in the seventeenth century used the "plain language," the "thee" and "thou" also adopted by Fox and his followers; and they repudiated the names of days and months of heathen origin, writing in their church books "first month," "second day," and the like. In their "meeting-houses" (they would not call them churches) the men and women sat on opposite sides of the room, and it was common for the men to bring their pipes and smoke them during the sermon. The privilege of women to equal participation in service with men was recognized

among them; women "prophesied" among them, and as deaconesses aided in the relief of their poor, on which they laid great stress. Singing was discouraged, the major part contending that it should be altogether excluded from public worship. Owing to the abuses connected with church "livings," they were greatly averse to having any fixed stipend for their ministers, most of whom engaged in secular callings for their support and received little or nothing from the churches save their travelling expenses. Still, it was held to be the duty of churches to contribute voluntarily from their means for the support of the ministry. Not only their ministers, commonly called "elders," were set apart by the laying on of hands, but the deacons also, who were often called "helps in government." Fasting and the washing of fellow-disciples' feet were general practices, and the anointing of the sick with oil was the rule among them. Church discipline was very strict.

"Marrying out of meeting" was an offence that always involved disfellowship. Amusements were held in great disfavor, and those that might be enjoyed without excommunication were few and not very exciting. Close watch was kept upon manners and morals, and extravagance and luxury were sternly rebuked. All Baptists were expected to wear simple apparel, and their garb was that of the modern Quaker, which was the common dress of the time. They did not, however, confound simplicity with peculiarity, and changed their dress from time to time to avoid unnecessary conspicuousness. So, as they found others of these customs to be no longer edifying and helpful, they gradually suffered such to lapse—a course, as they believed, wiser than that adopted by Fox and his followers.

CHAPTER IV

BAPTISTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND HER DEPENDENCIES

THE eighteenth century opened with the most flattering prospects of growth before the Baptists of England; when it closed there were still flattering prospects, but there had been surprisingly little growth. It is not easy to make even an approximate estimate of their numbers at any time during this century, but we are able to estimate the rate of their increase. There are now existing in England 123 Baptist churches that are older than the Act of Toleration. During the next half-century sixty-eight such churches were established, and in the second half of the century 165 others. A closer analysis shows that more than a hundred of these later additions were

made in the two closing decades of the century. The gross numbers would be considerably altered, of course, if we had definite records of the churches that were formed and afterward dissolved, but the relative proportions would probably not be greatly altered. A century's labors, therefore, after the Act of Toleration had resulted in just about doubling the number of Baptists. A growth of 100 per cent. a century would, in some cases easily conceivable, be little less than marvellous; in the present case it is comparative failure.

Are we to seek the causes of this failure among the Baptists themselves or in their environment? Was there some fatal lack in their character, their organization, their policy? Or did the times and the people constitute such conditions as made rapid progress nearly impossible? Careful study of the facts shows that there is something to be said under both these heads.

There were certain conditions among the

Baptists themselves that made rapid growth improbable, not to say impossible. To begin with, they had been from the first divided into two opposing theological factions. The strife between Calvinism and Arminianism was still a bitter warfare, in which quarter was neither asked nor given. The jealousy and bitterness thus engendered between these two wings of the Baptists would be incredible to one who had not otherwise learned the lengths to which theological controversy will carry those who profess to be followers of Christ. A single example will afford a measure of this bitterness. When Dan Taylor, the founder of the New Connection of General Baptists, having been first a Wesleyan convert, had been led by study of the New Testament to adopt Baptist views, but could not lay aside the Arminian doctrines he had learned from Wesley, none of the Baptist ministers of his neighborhood would baptize him, though they had no doubt whatever that he

was a Christian and was called by God to the ministry. They had the advantage of Peter, who in similar circumstances said, "What was I that I could hinder God?" They were Particular Baptists!

In addition to this, each wing contained its peculiar weaknesses and tendencies to disintegration—infirmities that failed to manifest themselves earlier only because the pressure of persecution had temporarily suppressed them. With freedom always comes opportunity of wrong-doing. Among the General Baptists there had been from the first two tendencies, apparently but not really conflicting, the one toward a stricter polity, the other toward a laxer doctrine. The pure independency typical of Baptist churches was gradually modified in the direction of Presbyterianism. Their General Assembly, instead of remaining a purely advisory and executive body, by degrees assumed the functions of a court. First attempting to decide questions arising

between sister churches, or between a church and some recalcitrant members, it then undertook the supervision of ministerial morals and doctrine, and finally intervened in all sorts of ecclesiastical affairs. The issue was continual strife and controversy, resulting at length in the complete paralysis of the churches.

Along with this went the tendency toward a laxer doctrine. Socianian ideas spread among the preachers. Matthew Caffyn, a Sussex pastor, was one of the first to be suspected of heresy, and soon the body was divided into adherents and opponents of Caffyn. By the middle of the century, a great part, some would say the majority, of the General Baptists had become Unitarians. A similar process was going on at the same time among the Presbyterians. A considerable part of the English Unitarians to-day are not such in corporate name, but still retain their ancient names of Baptist or Presbyterian—just as, in New Eng-

land, many Unitarian churches still bear the corporate title of Congregational churches. In neither of these bodies was the power of a closer organization able to resist the heretical lapse—the theoretical advantages that such a "strong" government has over the weaker independency did not manifest themselves in practice.

While the Calvinistic wing escaped these dangers, proving especially immune to the Socinian heresy that so greatly affected other bodies, including the Church of England, a malady not less serious attacked it. There was, among the earliest and ablest of the preachers, a marked tendency toward high Calvinism, and this developed in the eighteenth century into hyper-Calvinism, which as a theology becomes fatalism, and as morals antinomianism. English good sense and the English conscience prevented the latter error from becoming dangerous at any time, but the fatalistic idea obtained no little hold on men's minds. So much was

this the case that in many Baptist churches it was reckoned an impertinence, if not a sin, for a preacher to invite the impenitent to believe in Christ—that is the office of the Holy Spirit, who effectually calls in his own time those who are elect of God to salvation. It was the duty of the Christian preacher, as they conceived it, to edify, instruct and comfort the saints, and to warn sinners of the wrath to come, but exhortation and invitation of sinners were useless, if not wicked. The result of such beliefs does not require description. Growth under such conditions would be little short of miraculous, so completely would it be at variance with the ordinary workings of human nature.

But even these things do not adequately explain the failure of the English Baptists to advance more rapidly. There were conditions outside of themselves, for which they were in no way responsible, that shut them in as behind iron bars. The eight-

eenth century was a time of low religious tension everywhere, and particularly in England. In the Established Church, as well as in the Dissenting bodies, it was an era of weakness, declension and demoralization. Between 1689 and 1750, a period of two generations, there is barely one great name among the clergy of England, that of Joseph Butler. It was an age of feeble mediocrity, of rampant unbelief, of gross immorality, where strength and faith and purity might reasonably have been looked for. The progress of any religious denomination in a time of general spiritual dearth and stagnation, while not an impossibility, is not what we should ordinarily expect; and it is not, therefore, especially discreditable to the Baptists that they made but slow advances during this time.

That adverse external conditions had more to do with retarding their growth than internal difficulties and dissensions, seems to be proved by the events of the second half

of this century. The great spiritual fact of that time is the Wesleyan revival—the second Reformation in England. It would be difficult to overstate either the intensity or the far-reaching effects of this movement. Beginning as a leaven in the Church of England, the attempt of a few zealous young men to seek the higher spiritual life, it soon burst the bands with which narrow Churchmen would fain have confined it, and became a mighty evangelizing force, breathing a new spiritual life into the English nation, which manifested itself in a permanent modification of English character, and by consequence in an extensive reconstruction of moral ideals, of religious institutions, of social customs. Baptists did not, they could not, escape the consequences of so great a spiritual and moral revolution; their theology was modified, their spirit changed; yet with them this was not so much the introduction of something quite new, as a bringing of them back to their earlier princi-

ples and practices. But though the change thus produced in them was considerable, the change in surrounding conditions was more profound, complete and lasting; and in this we find, largely, the secret of their relatively rapid advance in the last quarter of the century.

The General Baptists were the first to respond, mainly because of the labors of a single man; a Yorkshire miner of little learning, but of great natural abilities, and of a piety and zeal unexcelled, Dan Taylor. Soon after his conversion under the preaching of John Wesley, his talents for exhortation induced his brethren to encourage him in the preaching of the gospel, and his immediate success led him to devote himself to this work. When study of the Scriptures made him a Baptist, and he could find no Particular Baptist minister to baptize him (there were no General Baptists near) he made a journey into Lincolnshire and was baptized in a river near Gamston, February

16, 1763. Returning he gathered a church and began to preach in all the surrounding region. He was fervidly evangelical, and as he learned more of the General Baptists he found himself wholly out of sympathy with most of them; and as his influence grew there gradually took form in his mind the project of a new organization. In 1770, through his agency, was formed the Assembly of Free Grace General Baptists, generally known as the New Connection, of which he became the leading spirit, practically its bishop for many years, though both he and they would have indignantly repudiated the name. He was indefatigable in labors, and the General Baptists increased with great rapidity.

New life was also manifested among the Particular Baptists. Two men were especially prominent as leaders of this advance. William Carey, village cobbler, schoolmaster, preacher, missionary, scholar, was one of England's greatest men, doing more to

make the India of to-day than Clive or Hastings, and contributing to the making of Christian England hardly less than John Wesley. The great missionary enterprise begun by him, which will be more fully treated in a later chapter, had results so extensive and powerful, not only upon his own people, but upon the whole Christian world, that it is hardly possible to fall into exaggeration or hyperbole in describing their character or diversity. Andrew Fuller (1754-1815) was born to be his complement. A Calvinist in theology, yet revolted by the extreme and barren doctrine of many who marched under that banner, he was not only a pungent and practical preacher, but a masterful man of affairs. The English Baptist Missionary Society was formed in his study at Kettering, October 2, 1792, and for many years Fuller was its life and soul. Slowly the Baptist churches rallied to the support of these two men, and in so doing found themselves, and began a

new career of usefulness. That more than a hundred new churches were constituted in the two decades following the organization of this society is a sufficient testimony to the reflex influence upon the English Baptists of their effort to give the gospel to India.

The nineteenth century is most remarkable, perhaps, for the increase of solidarity and organization that was the result of this missionary movement begun by Carey. Much earlier than this, to be sure, there had been the beginnings of organization in both wings of the Baptists. The Particular Baptist churches took the lead in this. The seven churches of London, as we have seen, united in the publication of a Confession in 1644; but this was union for a specific and temporary purpose, and, having attained its object, led to nothing further just then. In 1653, the churches of Somersetshire formed an association intended to be permanent, though it endured

but four years or so. In 1655, however, churches in the central counties formed the Midland association, which existed until 1892, when it was divided into the East and West Midland; and in 1689 the London churches brought about the organization of a General Assembly of all the churches of their order. All of these, with the possible exception of the Somerset association, were from the first delegated bodies, and all of them disclaimed the right of interference with the concerns of the local churches. Their declared objects were: increase of mutual fraternal knowledge and sympathy, the giving of advice and aid to churches that needed either, and "the joint carrying on of any part of the work of the Lord"—a clear indication of a missionary purpose.

There are fewer definite facts ascertainable concerning the origin of local associations among the General Baptists, but it is certain that such were numerous, and may even have had priority over those of the

Particular Baptists. They were meetings of looser organization at first than those in the Particular churches — mass-meetings held annually, semi-annually, often quarterly—and there is little room for doubt that from these gatherings Fox got his idea of the "yearly meeting" which became an established feature of the Friends' polity. When the first General Assembly of this wing was held is likewise uncertain, but it was some time before 1671, from which year it was a well-established institution. This body, as we have already seen, assumed powers not generally recognized among Baptists. The theory, as officially set forth, was: "General Councils and Assemblies, consisting of bishops, elders and brethren of the several churches of Christ, and being legally convened and met together out of all the churches, and the churches appearing by their representatives, make but one church, and have lawful rights and suffrage in this general meeting,

or assembly, to act in the name of Christ, it being of divine authority, and is the best means under heaven to preserve unity, to prevent heresy, and superintendency among or in any congregation whatsoever within its limits, or jurisdiction." No Baptist association now in existence would claim such powers, and no existing Baptist church would submit to such usurpation.

But these were, after all, only the beginnings of organization. The day of larger enterprises had dawned, and means were necessary for executing the new plans. The formation of the Baptist Home Mission Society in 1779 and of the Baptist Union in 1832 show the trend of events and the progress of the idea of solidarity. These were both Particular societies. The General Baptists also established their Missionary Society in 1816, and various others sprang into existence later, in response to special needs. For half a century, at least, the tendency in both wings was toward the

multiplication of such agencies, but in the last generation the desire for greater unity led to a gradual consolidation. The nucleus for such aggregation was the Baptist Union, the scope of which was widened to include Great Britain and Ireland, and in 1890 it became an incorporated body. In the following year the final stage of consolidation was reached, in the formal union of the General and Particular Baptist churches and societies. Distinction of doctrine had practically vanished long before, and the disappearance of distinctive names and administration properly and naturally followed.

This multiplication of societies is not always an infallible indication of corresponding growth, yet in this case appearances are not deceptive. In the first half of the last century, 700 new churches were constituted by the Baptists of the United Kingdom, and 961 were added during the second half. The largest progress in any

decade was in the "seventies," when 216 new churches were established. The new century began with over 2,700 Baptist churches and 365,000 members.

Thus far we have confined our attention exclusively to the history of Baptists in England. This is indeed by far the most important and interesting part of Baptist history, but there is something to be told of the other members of the United Kingdom and of the larger empire.

There are traditions in Wales as in England, of ancient Baptist churches, but there is no historic proof that there was an earlier church of that order than one founded at Swansea in 1649. The rapid growth of Baptists in Wales began during the Commonwealth, and the most active preacher of their doctrines was Vavasour Powell, the descendant of an ancient Welsh family, a minister for a time in the Church of England, a Puritan, finally a Baptist. Up to the Restoration, he is said to have estab-

lished twenty churches. After the Act of Toleration growth again began, and since 1810 the progress made has been phenomenal. The century closed with 835 churches and over 100,000 Baptists. The Welsh Baptists are all of the Calvinistic type, and until recent years have been strict communionists. Now in the larger towns and in the churches that maintain English services, the influence of the English Baptists is becoming felt, and churches are adopting the practice of "open" communion.

In Scotland we find Baptists making no pretensions to great antiquity. Some of that persuasion in Cromwell's army, while stationed at Edinburgh, are said to have founded a church, but on their going away it seemingly disappeared; and the oldest existing church is one formed in Keiss, on the estate of Sir William Sinclair, in 1750. A church was also established in Edinburgh in 1765 and one in Glasgow in 1768. A great impulse was given to the Baptist

cause in Scotland by the life and labors of Archibald McLean and his contemporaries, the brothers Haldane, Robert and James. Both the Haldanes were educated for the navy, but retired, Robert inheriting a large fortune and devoting himself to a life of good works, James becoming a preacher of the gospel. Both became Baptists in 1808, and were distinguished for their broad sympathies and unwearied labors. The Scotch Baptists have some peculiar practices, but are in general sympathy with their brethren in England.

The history of Baptists in Ireland also begins in the time of the Commonwealth, not long prior to 1650. More than two centuries and a half of effort have produced slight numerical results in this unfruitful soil —there being but thirty-one churches in the island at the beginning of this century. The famous chapter on "The Snakes of Ireland" is not quite paralleled, but almost. Two associations, a Northern and a

Southern, were formed in 1897 by these churches.

Besides the two main wings of the English Baptists, whose history has thus far been recounted, there are several smaller parties of which something should be added.

For a time in the sixteenth century there was a warm controversy among the English Baptists regarding the propriety or necessity of the laying on of hands after baptism. Apostolic precedent in Acts 19: 6 was pleaded by some, and confirmation was found in the mention of the laying on of hands in Heb. 6: 1, 2. The six particulars of faith and practice enumerated in the latter passage were taken by some to be a statement of the fundamentals of Christianity; and some churches were established to promote this view, which received the name of Six Principle Baptists. In March, 1690, five London churches holding these beliefs formed an association. At this time

both Calvinists and Arminians were united in these churches; some years later, however, the Calvinists withdrew, and the remnants were finally lost among the General Baptists.

The Seventh-day Baptists, as their name implies, separated from the rest of their brethren on a question of the day of worship. It was a prevalent notion among the English Puritans that the Fourth Commandment is of perpetual obligation; and certain Baptists drew the inference that the change from the seventh to the first day of the week, as a day of rest and worship, is unauthorized by the Scriptures and therefore wrong. The first church of the order was established in London, in 1676, by the Rev. Francis Bampfield, a graduate of Oxford, a prebend in Exeter Cathedral, who lost his living at Sherborne under the Act of Uniformity, and became a Dissenting preacher, for which he suffered many persecutions and several imprisonments. Persecution

did not cease with his becoming a Sabbatarian Baptist, but rather increased, and he died, broken down by his hardships in prison, a few years before the Act of Toleration would have secured him from further molestation. But one church now survives, the Millyard, in Whitechapel, London, and while this has a valuable property, it has dwindled to eighteen members.

Besides the men already mentioned, the Baptists of Great Britain produced many preachers and laymen of distinction during the last two centuries. John Gill (1697–1771) was a learned theologian and commentator, a rigid supra-lapsarian Calvinist, to whose teachings was due much of the paralysis that came upon the Particular Baptist churches. His writings, though once held in the highest esteem, are now known even by name only to the curious scholar. John Rippon (1751–1836) was pastor of one church in London for sixty-three years, which became under his minis-

trations the largest church in the metropolis. He is best remembered as the compiler of "Rippon's Collection," a hymnal made for his own people, to which he contributed many of his own verses, and which came into general use; and as the editor of the *Baptist Register*, a miscellany in which many valuable biographical and historical sketches appeared. The Stennett family was a very notable one. Beginning with Dr. Edward Stennett, a physician of high repute during the time of Charles II, and also a lay preacher, it contained three generations of Seventh-day Baptist preachers, all named Joseph Stennett. The eldest of these was a poet and hymn-writer who won much praise in his day. Samuel Stennett (1727–1795) a younger brother of Joseph the third, was the most celebrated of the whole family. Though a Sabbatarian in principle, he was pastor of a Particular church in London during all his active life. His scholarship won him the de-

gree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Aberdeen, in 1763. Though many of his writings were highly esteemed by his contemporaries, he is best remembered now by his hymns, of which two at least are found in all collections: "Majestic sweetness sits enthroned," and "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand."

A number of other hymnologists among the Baptists may well be mentioned at this point. Miss Anne Steele (1717–1778) was the daughter of a Baptist minister in Hampshire. She was an invalid during the greater part of her life, and her hours of pain were solaced by the composition of a number of volumes of verse, from which are taken a large number of hymns that are to be found in nearly all collections. The best known, perhaps, are: "Father of all mercies, in thy word," "The Savior! O what endless charms," and "Father, whate'er of earthly bliss." John Ryland (1753–1825) was the son of a distinguished

father and a distinguished man himself, and from his works have been drawn hymns for many books. The hymn that might dispute with any the praise of being the most frequently sung of all sacred songs, "Blest be the tie that binds," was written by Rev. John Fawcett (1740–1817), a Baptist preacher for more than fifty years and the author of many other verses still sung in all Christian congregations. Rev. Benjamin Beddome (1717–1795) wrote a whole volume of hymns, more than 800 in all, of which a dozen or more are familiar to every churchgoer. To have written "Come, thou fount of every blessing," would be a sure title to the remembrance of many generations of Christian people, but the Rev. Robert Robinson (1735–1790) also wrote many other hymns and a small library of books. To this list might easily be added the names of as many more, hardly less distinguished, and only less gratefully remembered, than the above.

To return now to the Baptist preachers and writers of this period, we find not a few, once highly honored, but strangers or nearly so to the present generation. Abraham Booth (1734–1806) was at first a preacher of the General Baptists, and so ardent an Arminian that he wrote a violent "Poem on Predestination," in which he confuted Calvinism. The very violence of his opinions and language produced a reaction, and he afterward wrote a prose treatise in defence of the doctrines he had opposed, which he called "The Reign of Grace." It was a greatly esteemed work, as was also a controversial book, "Pedobaptism Examined," but both have long since gone into oblivion. Rev. John Foster (1770–1843), once greatly celebrated among essayists, but, like Hazlitt and Jeffery and a score of others, rapidly becoming no more than a name to most readers of English literature, was also a Baptist minister —never so esteemed, however, for his

power in the pulpit as for his skill with the pen. Dr. Alexander Carson (1776–1844) is the most distinguished man whom the Baptists of Ireland have produced. He was a native of that country, was educated at the University of Glasgow, where he was graduated with high honors, and had before him a promising career as a scholar, could he have remained a Presbyterian. Compelled by conscience to become a Baptist, he gathered a church in his native land, which grew to a membership of five hundred, while his writings spread his fame abroad.

Three of the most celebrated preachers of England in the present century were pastors of Baptist churches. Robert Hall (1764-1831) was educated at Bristol College and the University of Aberdeen, and might have won fame as a scholar had he not developed so great powers as a pulpit orator. At Cambridge, at Leicester, at Bristol, he was greatly successful as a preacher,—the schol-

ars, statesmen and men of letters of his day being unanimous in his praise. His style is polished and ornate, but cumbrous, and the present generation finds it hard to comprehend the secret of his wide popularity and enduring fame. Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892) was the son of a Congregational preacher, but in early life became a Baptist, and before his beard was grown had become pastor of a London church and acquired a metropolitan fame as a preacher. During the rest of his life he ministered to the same church, which grew to be the largest in the world (5,000 members), and engaged in multifarious labors. To the power of the pulpit was in his case added the power of the press, and his printed sermons were read weekly by hundreds of thousands. Nor did his work perish with him; the church that he built up, the institutions that he founded, have continued, with little or no diminution of energy and usefulness. The third preacher, Alexander

Maclaren (b. 1825) is a graduate of the London University, and after a pastorate at Southampton became in 1858 pastor of a church at Manchester, where he still remains. Not so great a master of assemblies as Spurgeon in England, or Beecher in America, he has had no superior in either country in intellectual grip and spiritual power.

A long list of men, distinguished in various callings, might be added—such as Joseph Angus, D. D., and Thomas Spencer Baynes, LL. D., eminent as educators and authors; Major-General Havelock, Chief Justice Sir Robert Lush, and the like. In spite of social disabilities of various kinds—and until quite recently, legal disabilities as well—many Baptists have risen to foremost places and won the respect of the whole nation.

It is not easy to forecast the probable effect upon English Baptists of the recent movement toward the federation of all the

dissenting bodies. In connection with certain other tendencies, it points in the direction of a limitation of their growth, if not toward their ultimate extinction. During the last century, the progress of "open" communion sentiment was very rapid, until the great majority of English-speaking churches have adopted this practice. Not only so, many have taken the next logical step, and adopted "open" membership also; that is to say, they receive to membership any Christians, without asking whether they have been baptized or not. From this to the dropping of all denominational distinctions would seem no long step. The federation movement may or may not hasten that which seems in any case to be probable, not to say inevitable.

In the English dependencies Baptists are strongest in the Canadas. Soon after the capture of Quebec by the English, Baptist settlers from the New England colonies began to establish themselves in Nova

Scotia, and from 1763 churches were organized. The first churches in the Province of Quebec were formed by Baptists who crossed the line from Vermont. In Upper Canada or Ontario, settlers from New York planted the first churches. Later there were English and Scotch immigrants of Baptist stock, the latter being fruits of the Haldane work. From these small beginnings, Canadian Baptists have grown, in little more than a century, to over a thousand churches and nearly 100,000 members.

The forming of associations began in 1800 in Nova Scotia, and kept pace with the progress of the churches. The first missionary society was formed in the same region in 1815, and others followed, but in 1846 all were united in the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces. The other provinces had a similar experience, the first society being organized in 1837, from which time various home, foreign and publication societies were formed, all of which were

merged in 1888 into the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. A separate Convention was established in 1881 for Manitoba and the Northwest. Various Boards, elected by these Conventions, conduct the work once under the charge of separate societies.

The Baptists of Great Britain, having ample educational facilities at hand, have found it sufficient for denominational purposes to establish a few theological schools, or "colleges," for the training of their ministers. In a newer country like Canada, the case was different; there everything was to be provided. Canadian Baptists accordingly began with the founding of academies, and as they increased in numbers and wealth they also established colleges. These last were colleges in the American, not the English sense,—schools, that is to say, for advanced instruction in the arts and sciences, though in some of them provision was made for theological instruction

as well, for such students as had the ministry in view. It was not until 1880 that a theological seminary was founded at Toronto, to which later an arts department was added, and the institution became known as McMaster University, in honor of its founder.

The first Baptist church in Australia was constituted at Sidney, N. S. W., in 1834. The following year another church was formed at Melbourne, Victoria. It was not until 1856 that the work began in Queensland, and in 1861 the first church was gathered in South Australia. Since these first beginnings, the work has spread to New Zealand, Tasmania and Western Australia. At the end of little more than a half century, there are reported from this region 236 churches, with over 19,000 members. As the total population is about 4,000,000, this is still a very small proportion of Baptists and leaves abundant opportunity for growth.

In other British possessions—notably in South Africa and Jamaica—there are Baptist churches in a state more or less flourishing, but their history offers nothing of special interest. It is enough to say, perhaps, by way of summary, that, at the beginning of this century, there were in the British Empire over 5,000 churches and 700,000 members—including some Indian missions not begun or conducted by Englishmen.

CHAPTER V

BAPTIST BEGINNINGS IN AMERICA

Among the early Puritan settlers of New England, there were a number who held Baptist principles, some of whom afterward became Baptists, but there were not enough at any one time or place to form a church. Others there were whose study of the Scriptures was leading them toward Baptist views. Among the latter was Roger Williams, a graduate of Cambridge, in 1627, who became a convert to the principles of the Separatists and emigrated in search of religious freedom. He imagined that this was to be found in the new colony of Massachusetts Bay, but he landed at Boston, in 1631, only to find that the Puritans had established a theocracy, and were no more disposed than Laud himself, their

arch-enemy and persecutor, to allow any dissent from the religion established by law.

Almost immediately, therefore, Williams found himself in difficulty, since he was an earnest and conscientious seeker after truth, a zealous lover of liberty, and somewhat contentious withal. He was by no means ready to exchange one form of intolerance for another, and flatter himself that he had gained anything by the change. He was called to be minister at Salem, a more congenial home, as this colony (like Plymouth) was composed of Separatists like himself, which the Massachusetts Puritans never were. He was not suffered to remain here long, however, but was summoned before the General Court in Boston to answer for certain published opinions. He had given mortal offence to the government in at least two ways: he had denied the validity of the land titles of the colony, and he had questioned the authority of magistrates to

punish "the breach of the first table" of the law, that is, religious offences as distinguished from civil.

This assertion of the rights of conscience was an unpardonable crime in this Puritan commonwealth. Various efforts have been made in recent times to becloud the issue, and to make it appear that Williams was punished for civil offences merely. His judges, not foreseeing the exigences to which their later defenders would be reduced, did not take pains to disguise their real reason, but put it in the very foreground of the decree of banishment, which they pronounced October 8, 1635: "Whereas, Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church at Salem, hath broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates," etc. He was condemned to be deported to England in the first ship, but he evaded the sentence by departing hastily from the jurisdiction of the court. Making his way through the

wilderness, he was kindly received by the Narragansett Indians, and, purchasing from them the land on which the city of Providence now stands, he founded a new colony there. Settlers from his flock at Salem, and others, quickly joined him, and the daring venture was a success. It was established on the principle of complete religious liberty, the settlers entering into a compact, in 1638, to obey all laws made "for the public good of the body . . . only in civil things." This was the first government in the world to be built on the cornerstone of absolute liberty, to the point of incompatibility with the preservation of public order and private property; all other governments had maintained, in practice if not in theory, that the majority had the right to restrict and coerce the minority in all that pertains to religion. This was a small state to be sure, but as the colony grew the principle was maintained, and when a royal charter was obtained, in 1633,

this became the fundamental law and such it has ever remained.

Up to this time Williams had been what we should now call a Congregationalist. His study of the Scriptures, however, was leading him to the conclusion that infant baptism finds no warrant there, the only baptism of apostolic times being the baptism of those who had believed in Christ. Others among the Providence settlers had come to the same conclusion, and about March, 1639, they were ready to act as their belief demanded. There was no minister other than Williams, and he was, according to their new conclusion, unbaptized like the rest of them. The only course that seemed open to them was, therefore, to originate baptism among themselves. Accordingly, Ezekiel Holliman, who had been a member of the Salem church, baptized Williams, and he baptized Holliman and ten others, thus constituting the First Baptist Church of Providence, with twelve members.

There is no definite mention of how this baptism was performed; whence it has been inferred that, as immersion had not yet been introduced among the Baptists of England, it was probably an affusion. But the studies of Williams may as easily have convinced him that immersion was the right baptism as that only believers should be baptized. And, whereas, in the case of the English Baptists, we have a clear and definite record of the introduction of immersion among them, confirmed by a multitude of other documents, there is not only no such record among American Baptists, but it should seem there must have been, if a change had been subsequently made from affusion to immersion. The strong probability, therefore, amounting under all the circumstances to a moral certainty, is that at Providence and elsewhere, immersion was practiced from the first.

About a year after the Providence colony was founded, a new settlement was made

at Newport by John Clarke and others. Clarke was of like antecedents with Williams, a Puritan and a Separatist, and before his emigration from London had been a physician of repute. He became the "teacher" of the Newport settlement, where another Baptist church was afterward formed. The facts about the beginning and early history of this church are very obscure, and a more positive statement than the above is unwarranted. Our first certain knowledge is that in 1648 such a church existed, having fifteen members. But how long before this it was established is a matter of conjecture, not of knowledge. We do know, however, that the Newport colony agreed with that of Providence in the matter of religious liberty for all its members.

The first church in the Massachusetts colony was of Welsh origin, the church at Swansea, Wales, having emigrated in a body with their pastor, John Myles, to

escape persecution. They settled first at Rehoboth, in 1633, and in 1667 removed to a new site, which they named Swansea, in memory of their old home, and this name it still bears. In 1665 a church was organized in Boston, in the house of Thomas Goold, who ten years before had been "admonished" for refusing to present a child for baptism. This church consisted of nine members, two of whom were women.

Before this, the persecuting tendencies of the Puritan government had clearly manifested themselves. John Clarke, of the Newport church, and a fellow-member, Obadiah Holmes, had been arrested for holding a religious service in a private house at Lynn; for which they were sentenced to pay heavy fines, in default of which they were to be "well whipped." Clarke's fine was paid by a friend, but the sentence was carried out upon Holmes, in the streets of Boston. This happened Sep-

tember 6, 1661, a date that stands for the most shameful, though not the most cruel, act in the history of Puritan Massachusetts. Henry Dunster, president of Harvard College, for his denial of infant baptism was compelled to resign his office, and was subjected to repeated censures, and possibly only a timely death saved him from worse treatment.

Now a determined attempt was made to destroy this Boston church. Thomas Goold was repeatedly imprisoned and treated with such rigor that his health was broken, and he died in 1675. Others fared only a little better. When the little band ventured to build a small meeting-house, in 1678, the doors were nailed up by order of the council. This was, however, the last violent proceeding against them—public opinion in the colony was decidedly adverse to further measures of the kind. In 1691 a new charter was given to the colony, which assured "liberty of conscience to all Chris-

tians, except Papists." Nevertheless, the progress of Baptists long continued to be very slow; down to the Great Awakening there were but eight churches in Massachusetts.

Maine was at this time a part of the Massachusetts colony, and Baptists there experienced the same treatment as elsewhere within the jurisdiction of that government. Two settlers at Kittery, having come to hold Baptist sentiments, made their way to Boston and were baptized, and then returned to organize a church at their home. The little flock was so harrassed by persecutions, however, that the entire number, seventeen in all, emigrated and settled at Charleston, S. C., where in 1684 they formed the first Baptist church in the South. It was more than eighty years later, after the close of the War of Revolution, that a second attempt was made to plant a Baptist church in Maine.

The next region of New England in

which progress was made was the colony of Connecticut. The first church was organized in 1705, at Groton, probably by Baptists from Rhode Island, and others sprang up thereafter, at the rate of one for each decade. Every Baptist was liable in this colony to a fine of ten shillings for every time he absented himself from public worship or attended a meeting in a private house. It does not appear that the penalty was ever enforced with rigor, or that imprisonments or whippings were ever employed in Connecticut as means of argument with these obstinate heretics.

The group of colonies afterward known as the Middle States were very different in their history and characteristics from New England. The latter region was settled almost exclusively by Englishmen, and English ideas were consequently always dominant. New York was originally a Dutch colony, and has never wholly lost the character impressed upon it by its first

settlers. New Jersey was a Swedish colony, and then English; while Pennsylvania, though nominally English, was from the first the goal of large numbers of Welsh and Germans. These colonies were, therefore, of mixed population from their earliest years, and while English ideas predominated in them on the whole, they had no exclusive possession of the field, and were subject to great modifications.

For these and other reasons a more liberal religious policy governed these colonies, and there was little active persecution in them. The only exception was in New York, and that was a short-lived affair, since its cause was the personal character of one governor of the infant colony, Peter Stuyvesant. All Dissenters from the Reformed Church felt the weight of his displeasure. The first Baptists were gathered in the colony through the preaching of William Wickenden, one of the elders of the Providence church, in 1656. Whether

he organized a church is not known, probably not, for he was arrested in the midst of his work, thrown into prison and then banished. These and other persecutions were promptly disapproved by the Company that then controlled the colony.

Probably the first church formed, at any rate the oldest now in existence, was at Oyster Bay, L. I. About 1700 William Rhodes, a Baptist from one of the Rhode Island churches, began to preach and make converts there. Just when the church was organized we have no definite information, but it was some time before 1724, for in that year Robert Feeks was ordained to be its pastor, and it has had a continuous history ever since. A church was formed in New York city, possibly earlier than this. Valentine Wightman, a pastor at that time of the church at Groton, Conn., began to hold meetings in the house of Nicholas Eyres, a wealthy brewer, about 1711. Eyres was

himself converted in these meetings, was baptized in 1714, and not long after became minister to the church that for some years continued to meet in his house. After a time they had a meeting-house, but internal dissensions led to the loss of the property and the dissolution of the church, about 1730.

The churches now in existence in New York were of the Calvinistic type from the first, and their origin is traced to private meetings held from 1745 onward in the house of Jeremiah Dodge, a ship-builder. The little congregation gathered here were unable to support a pastor, and from 1753 to 1762 they were members of a Baptist church at Scotch Plains, N. J., which was founded in 1747. On being constituted a separate church, they had as pastor Rev. John Gano, who labored with them for twenty-six years, and left them a vigorous and growing body. From this church sprang the others now found in the metrop-

olis, and many others in the surrounding region.

The first Baptist church of New Jersey was formed at Middletown, in 1688. It was mostly composed of men and women who had sought in this colony the freedom, denied them in New York and New England, to worship God according to their understanding of the Scriptures. In the following year, a colony that had been first settled at Dover, N. H., emigrated in a body to New Jersey and formed the Piscataway church. Churches were soon afterward established at Cohansey (1690), Cape May (1712) and Hopewell (1715).

At the same time, another group of churches was gathering about Philadelphia. The first, at Cold Spring, (1684) was not long lived, but a more permanent beginning was made in 1688 at Pennepek or Lower Dublin, now incorporated in the city, but then a little village some miles away. A preaching station or branch of this church

appears to have been shortly after established in Philadelphia, which was not formally constituted a church until 1746. These churches were at first composed about equally of Welsh, Irish and English Baptists. The Welsh Tract church was formed in 1701, in a settlement that is now in the state of Delaware.

This group of churches in these three colonies, of which Philadelphia became the recognized centre, soon proved to be the most influential, in fact the determining force, in the history of American Baptists. They turned the course of development into a different channel from that which at first seemed likely to be taken. Down to the year 1700, it seemed most probable that American Baptist churches would be mainly of the General or Arminian wing. The majority of the New England churches were of that type; the first two churches formed in New York were of the same order; nearly half the New Jersey churches

were Arminian also. But all the churches in and about Philadelphia held the strongest, though not the most extreme Calvinism. About these the Calvinistic churches of New Jersey rallied, and the result was that they had the enthusiasm and missionary spirit that enabled them to take the lead and fix the type of Baptist theology for the ensuing generations.

But they did far more than this. Philadelphia became also the centre of organization, of expansion, of propaganda. Nearly all the denominational institutions that had their origin later, can either be definitely traced to this centre, or received from it their heartiest and most efficient support. The later history, as it will be told, will be seen to verify in detail a statement that might seem to some rather sweeping.

The first step taken was the organizing of the Philadelphia association. The churches in New Jersey maintained very close relations from the first with those

about Philadelphia, and "general meetings" were held from time to time for preaching, baptisms and the like. These were appointed with each church in turn, and as many members as possible from the other churches attended. As the churches increased in members, the maintenance of this custom became increasingly difficult, so that in 1707 the churches contented themselves with appointing delegates to attend the meeting. From this time on, an annual meeting of such a delegated body has always been held, but just when it was generally recognized as having become what Baptist churches call an association, or received such a name, is matter of much uncertainty. As this Philadelphia association increased in strength, it attracted to its membership Baptists from quite distant regions; and at one time there were churches on its roll as far North as Dutchess county, New York, and as far South as Charleston, S. C. In time, the New York,

Carolina, Virginia and New Jersey churches withdrew and formed associations in their own states. The New England churches also organized on a similar plan, and by the close of the eighteenth century there were forty-eight such associations among American Baptists.

These bodies have never quite lost their early devotional and evangelistic characteristics, but they soon took on another trait that became even more distinctive. They became missionary societies, and concerned themselves chiefly with the planting of new churches, and the aiding of such as had been too recently established to have attained capacity for self-support. The rapid increase of Baptist churches in later years was due mainly to this feature of associational work. Had they remained mere annual gatherings for mutual gratulation and religious services, they would have been a comparatively meaningless feature of American Baptist history. In view of what

they actually became and accomplished, they must be pronounced the main factor in denominational progress. The adoption, in 1742 or before, of the Philadelphia Confession, a reissue with some modifications of the Confession published in 1689 by the English Baptists, marks definitely the victory of the Calvinistic wing over the Arminian elements in the churches.

With the exception of the Charleston church, no Baptist churches were founded in the Southern colonies in the seventeenth century. There are said to be traces of Baptists in North Carolina, near the Virginia line, as early as 1695, but no church is known to have existed earlier than 1727. In Virginia some General Baptists settled as early as 1714, and churches began to multiply rapidly in both these colonies. The oldest church in Maryland was formed in 1772, and progress there has never been rapid.

The victory of the Calvinistic elements

was, indeed, almost too complete, and there was danger that a paralysis would attack these colonial churches, as complete and disastrous as that experienced by their English brethren. From this they were fortunately saved by the Great Awakening, which began as a local movement in Massachusetts about 1734, but after 1740 became a general revival of religion that was felt throughout the colonies. The labors of Whitefield had a great effect on the Baptist churches, and profoundly modified their doctrine and practice, so far as the latter term includes the beneficent activities of a religious body. This is, on the whole, the most important single fact in the history of American Christianity—in all the subsequent history of all the denominations its influence may be traced. No religious body was affected more deeply or in more particulars, than the Baptists.

In New England, where the movement began, the effects were naturally first mani-

fested. In a century previous, only eight Baptist churches had been formed; in thirty-five years after the revival, twenty churches had come into existence, and by 1784 the total number was seventy-three, with over 3,000 members. Extension of the Baptists into the neighboring colonies began at once. Churches were formed in New Hampshire from 1750 onward, and about 1780 three churches were almost simultaneously established in Vermont. The planting of churches in Maine began once more; while in Rhode Island and Connecticut the promising early beginnings more than fulfilled their promise. In 1784 the New England Baptist churches numbered 151, and their members were returned at 4,783.

Still more rapid was the progress in the South. Four churches in North Carolina, constituted between 1743 and 1762, formed the Ketockton association in 1766. Some General Baptist churches in Virginia organized an association the previous year, the

Kehukee, which not long afterward changed its theological position and became a Calvinistic body. Indeed, in later years it joined the straitest sect of the Calvinists. Settlers from New England in Virginia brought with them the "New Light" teachings and methods of Whitefield. A single church founded by them was the parent of forty-two others in seventeen years, and the churches so formed sent out 125 preachers of the gospel. The "New Lights" or "Separates" and the "Regulars" found a way of composing their differences in 1787, and were thenceforth called United Baptists. Some thousands of them cling to the same name still, and are not counted with the main body of the denomination for that reason. In South Carolina there was similar progress; the Charleston association was formed in 1751, and the churches multiplied from that time forth with astonishing rapidity.

It might have been expected that the

Revolution would seriously interfere with the progress of the Baptist churches, and that they would have found themselves at the end of the struggle greatly disintegrated and weakened. Such was notably the case with the Church of England in the colonies, and the Methodist church suffered greatly. But there were reasons why Baptists should be less harmed than others: they had no internal dissensions; almost to a man they were patriots. In the other churches, particularly among their ministers, there were many who sympathized with the mother country, and if they were not known as Tories, they could not be active patriots. Moreover, the war caused the suspension of those persecutions from which Baptists had still suffered, particularly in Virginia; and they were free, so far as their own countrymen were concerned, to preach the gospel as they had opportunity. They suffered inconvenience, and sometimes wrongs, where the British troops were in

actual occupation: the church in New York City was practically disbanded for a time, its house of worship was used as a stable for British cavalry. Some Baptist meeting-houses in New Jersey, which was a constant battle-ground for years, were used in a similar manner, and at least one was maliciously burned by the enemy. But this was practically the sum total of loss sustained, and the fact seems to be that, on the whole, the years of the war were favorable to Baptist progress. There were more churches at the close of the struggle than at the beginning, and save in a few localities, the older churches showed increased strength.

One result of the Revolution was the immediate removal of the disabilities of Baptists in several colonies, and their ultimate relief in all. The spirit of liberty that brought about the struggle could not fail, in the end did not fail, to secure religious liberty equally with civil. Hardly had the

conflict ended when Virginia swept from her statute-book the last vestige of religious inequality. Many of the new state constitutions secured the equality of all religious beliefs by forbidding special favors to any. One of the chief criticisms against the Federal Constitution in some of the states was that it was silent on this subject, and the first amendment made to that instrument provided that no religious tests or establishments should ever be set up by Congress. In New England it required another generation to secure the adoption of this principle, but it was already apparent to the most careless observer that State Churches were doomed in every state of the Union.

For nearly a century now, the principle has been unquestioned in America that the interests of both Church and State are best secured when the two institutions are completely separated. Even those who are not greatly concerned to preserve religious

liberty—because they care nothing for religion—are anxious to secularize the State; and so none openly dissent from the principle. This triumph of religious liberty, on so large a scale—a triumph that has greatly impressed foreign nations, without having, as yet, led them far in the direction of adopting a like policy—is a triumph of the Baptists. For they were the first to advocate (during several generations almost the only Christians to advocate) and the first to practice this truth, now become a truism.

CHAPTER VI

BAPTISTS IN THE UNITED STATES

WITHOUT question, the most important event in the history of American Baptists in the nineteenth century was the formation of their foreign mission society. It was not until the second decade of the century was well advanced that this great forward step was taken. In explanation of this early apathy, it should be borne in mind that it was not until the closing decade of the eighteenth century that European Christians, with all their wealth and resources, began to awaken to their duty to give the gospel to the heathen. It is not surprising, then, that another decade was required to rouse American Christians, with their smaller resources and their more pressing needs at home, to realize that the great Commission

was addressed to them. It was a few young men, students at Williams College and later at Andover Theological Seminary, who were the means of stirring the latent foreign mission sentiment to life. In order to send out these young men as missionaries to the heathen—a work to which they believed themselves to be divinely called—the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was organized in June, 1810. Among the first sent out were Adoniram Judson and his wife, Ann Hazeltine Judson, who were to labor at Calcutta, and Luther Rice, who sailed for the same port on another ship.

Knowing that they would meet English Baptist missionaries there, and anticipating possible controversy, Mr. and Mrs. Judson made a special study on the voyage of the question of baptism, from the Scriptures and such books as they had with them. The result was to raise grave doubts in their minds regarding the practice in which as

Congregationalists they had been bred. After landing they continued their study, with the aid of other books procured in Calcutta, and finally both came to the firm conclusion that only believers' baptism is warranted by the New Testament. They were too brave and conscientious to hesitate as to their action, when once their minds were decided, and on September 6, 1812, they were immersed at Calcutta by William Ward. Shortly after this Luther Rice landed, and it appeared that he had had a similar experience, so he too was baptized.

These missionaries had left home as Congregationalists, in the employ of a Board organized and supported by Congregationalist churches. They had become Baptists, and could not longer expect such relations to continue. But their missionary call had not been revoked—that came from a higher source than their commission as missionaries. What to do, was the question. The English Baptist missionaries came to

their temporary assistance, but it was resolved that Luther Rice should at once return to America, tell what had happened, and if possible induce the Baptist churches to undertake the support of the Judsons.

This expedient was triumphantly successful. Mr. Rice reached Boston in September, 1813, and began to tell his story. None more inspiring could well be conceived, and he was a man in every way fitted to tell it with effect. Wherever he spoke, it was recognized that here was the call of Providence to the Baptists of America to take up this work and carry it on. Almost immediately the churches of Boston and vicinity promised to be responsible for the support of Mr. and Mrs. Judson, but they also saw that here was an opportunity to accomplish much more than this, and a duty also—the Baptist churches of the entire land ought to be awakened and interested in this work. At the request of the wisest and most influential Baptists of New England, Luther

Rice undertook a tour throughout the country; he travelled thousands of miles and visited all the principal cities and towns; and wherever he went the missionary spirit kindled and burned. Local missionary societies sprang up everywhere, and at length, almost by a universal and spontaneous desire, delegates from interested churches met at Philadelphia, in May, 1814, and organized the "General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions."

This was the turning-point in the history of American Baptists. Something was needed at just this juncture to unify their forces and overcome the disintegrating tendencies of extreme independency. The enthusiasm for foreign missions, and the united effort necessary to support the General Convention and enlarge its sphere of operations, furnished the required bond of union. The scattered Baptist churches were no longer so many separate units; they became a

"denomination." Without parting with the least function of their cherished independence, these churches now became conscious of a common life, of common interests; and this new consciousness made practicable, even easy, enterprises that before would have been considered impossible. What Baptists have accomplished for foreign missions has been considerable, as will be told at length in the next chapter, but the reflex influence of the work upon the home churches has been far greater than all that has been done abroad.

For a time the General Convention undertook to foster home as well as foreign missions, but there were difficulties connected with such a mingling of objects, and it was finally decided on all hands to be better to have a separate society for conducting the home work. This was, however, an unfortunate decision, the evil consequences of which have been fully appreciated by the churches only within the past few years,

and indeed are not yet acknowledged by all. Still, this result was reached in a most natural and inevitable way, as the end of a chain of circumstances almost too strong to be broken; and if our fathers made a mistake, it is not for us to blame them, but to show ourselves wiser, if we may. The formation of this second missionary society came about in this way.

With the gaining of their independence and the coming of peace, the American people entered upon that era of prosperity and progress which was to astonish the world. They had just awakened to a consciousness of their opportunity, the vastness of their domain was just coming to be understood. The first decade of peace saw a movement of the population westward that has hardly yet ceased, and the wilderness almost literally began to blossom as the rose. This was a movement of the greatest import to Baptists, for they bore a prominent part in the settlement of the new

regions, and found their best opening in the new towns that began to dot the Central West, and were in great need of the preaching of the gospel.

Even before the Revolution began, there were attempts to plant settlements in the central and western parts of New York and Pennsylvania, and a few hardy hunters and explorers had found their way over the Alleghanies, but as soon as the war ended the westward advance began in earnest. A settlement made in Otsego county, New York, became the vantage-ground whence Baptists extended their influence in all directions. Many New England people sought homes here, mostly "Separates," or followers of Whitefield, and these in large numbers united with the Baptist churches formed in this region.

Among the first settlers of Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio were Baptist families, and the organization of churches began at a very early date in the history of these states.

The first church in Tennessee was formed in 1765, and by 1790 there were eighteen churches, with 889 members. Such rapidity of growth was characteristic of the whole West, and was sometimes exceeded. The first Kentucky church, for example, dates from 1782, and in 1790 there were forty-two churches and 3,095 members. In Ohio the first church was formed in 1790, and the first association in 1797. Baptists from Virginia were the first people to settle in Illinois, but the first church was constituted in 1796.

These things did not just happen so. This rapid progress in the new regions was the result of much hard work and well directed. The Baptist people of that day were quick to see their opportunity, and as prompt to seize it. To the best of their resources, they provided for the evangelizing of these new western settlements. The churches and associations in the older communities gave liberally out of their

poverty to sustain travelling preachers—home missionaries, we should call them now—who labored incessantly and amid great privations to carry the gospel to these destitute places. The pioneer people received these ministrations, for the most part, with touching gratitude and eagerness; converts were numerous; churches sprang up as by magic everywhere; and in a surprisingly short time these churches called pastors of their own, organized associations, and began in turn to help others more needy than themselves.

It was the demand for this form of service that led to the beginnings of organization for missionary work, antedating by some years the interest taken in foreign missions. The associations were found to be unequal to the exigency; some larger body, that would unite the energies of the churches belonging to several associations, was the first expedient that was tried. The Baptists of Massachusetts organized a

domestic Missionary Society in 1802, and sent out evangelists who labored in western New York and central Pennsylvania. In 1807 the Lake Baptist Missionary Society was formed in central New York, and conducted missionary operations in the rapidly settling western counties of the state. Such societies multiplied, and for a generation seemed to meet the needs of the case; then they gave way to the various state conventions that sprang up in response to the general desire for a larger and more powerful organization for strictly domestic missions. But as these societies were formed within state lines, and began to circumscribe their labors within the same limits, there was greater need than ever for some provision to carry on the work in the great West, and all the resources of all the churches were felt to be not too large for this enterprise. The formation of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, in 1832, was the response to this demand.

Its constituency was all the Baptist churches of the United States, and its field the whole of North America.

It would be a mistake to conceive of these organizations among Baptists as isolated and exceptional facts; they were only participating in a general forward movement of all American Christians. The Methodist Episcopal Church was little behind in establishing a foreign missionary society, which it did in 1819; and the Protestant Episcopal Church formed its society in the following year. There was then a pause for some years, but from 1836 onward all the evangelical denominations hastened to make permanent provision for the doing of this work. A similar thing was true of the work of home missions. The Congregationalists organized the American Home Mission Society in 1826, and the Presbyterians appointed their separate Board for this work in 1816, while the Episcopal Church formed a society for

Home Missions in 1821. The missionary movement was not merely general among the Christian Churches of America; it was universal.

Next to this organization for the work of world-wide missions, the most important feature of American religious history during the early part of the last century was the growth of Sunday-schools. One of the first schools to be established in America for exclusively religious instruction was begun by the First Baptist church of Philadelphia in 1815. By 1825 Sunday-schools were to be found in all the principal towns of the United States, in connection with the churches of all denominations, and from that time onward the progress of the movement was marvellous. We are especially concerned to note only the effect of this new Christian enterprise upon denominational growth. One is in little danger of speaking too strongly on this point, for no other agency has ever secured

the formation of so many new churches. Exact statistics are not attainable, but probably quite half the Baptist churches formed within the past eighty years might be traced back to a Sunday-school begun by a few enterprising workers, in some schoolhouse or private dwelling, as a "mission." After a time occasional preaching services were held at the same place, converts were made, and in due time a church was organized.

The new movement demanded and created a literature of its own, and this called into existence, or gave new life to already existing, societies of publication. The American Sunday-school Union, founded in 1824, and the American Tract Society, established in 1825, are examples of such agencies, in which Christians of various denominations cooperated. But in a country where denominational spirit is so strong as in the United States, it was inevitable that each of the stronger religious bodies,

at least, should have means of their own for this sort of work. Here again the Baptists probably made a mistake in organizing the work of publication as something wholly separate from missions, for the Christian press is a missionary agency and cannot be anything else without ceasing to be Christian. In 1824 a Tract Society had been formed by a few Baptists at Washington, which was soon transferred to Philadelphia, and in 1840 was renamed the "American Baptist Publication and Sunday-school Society." This did not mean that it then first began the publication of Sunday-school literature, any more than the dropping of the second phrase in the name after 1844 signified cessation of such publications. From 1840, however, the issue of Sunday-school books and papers became an increasingly important part of the work, though it has never precluded due attention to general denominational literature.

Thus fully provided with organization,

the Baptist churches began early in the nineteenth century to make extremely rapid progress. Growth in the last quarter of the preceding century had been very fast, since their members had come by 1800 to be quite a hundred thousand; and that rate of increase was nearly maintained for another quarter century or more. In that time the members were about tripled; and since then the numbers have doubled again in every quarter century. All statisticians agree that the increase of the United States in population has been something unexampled in history; but the increase of Baptists has been twice as rapid as the growth of population. As no considerable part of this increase has been due to immigration, and no large percentage has been at the expense of other denominations, such growth means that the Baptist churches have been very successful in their work of evangelization.

That also is the conclusion to which

closer study of the facts leads one. The first half of the century was a time of frequent periodic waves of religious interest, or "revivals." These were peculiar to no one denomination or section, but constitute a general phenomenon in the history of American Christianity, the Baptists sharing in the common awakenings, and using the same methods of work that other churches found both expedient and effective. Quite a number of the celebrated revival preachers, or "evangelists," of the time were Baptists, but it cannot be said that the churches derived any special advantages from this fact. The holding of "protracted meetings" was a nearly universal custom, and was long believed to be the most effective means of reaching the unconverted and carrying on religious work. To express even a modest doubt was to incur the imputation of being a scoffer and a foe to true religion. The intervals between these "revivals" were supposed to be devoted to the indoctrination

and training of the converts, and to preaching that should sow the seed for another like harvest in due time.

The frequency and fervor of such meetings have greatly declined within the last quarter-century, and two quite opposite interpretations are current, each purporting to account for the fact. By some, apparently still the majority, this is taken as a symptom of general spiritual decline, and such believe the only hope of the churches to lie in a reversion to the former methods. Others hold that the day of "revivals" has gone never to return, and so far from seeing in this an indication of disease they believe it to be a symptom of better spiritual health. They do not see that a life of alternate chills and fever is better for a Christian's soul than for his body. More importance and value, they think, should be attached to what are called, with unconscious disparagement, "the ordinary means of grace," than to seasons of extraordinary excitement

and spasmodic activity, as the saner and more promising method of the two. Time, the great decider of religious disputes, will show which is right.

This great progress of the Baptists was not accomplished without many difficulties to encounter and overcome. Their poverty was a serious obstacle. They often missed great opportunities from sheer inability to meet the inevitable cost of a further advance. A more serious trouble was the constant opposition they experienced from other denominations. This was in the nature of things, and does not imply any unchristian spirit on the part of opponents. If Baptists really believe and practice what they profess, they necessarily occupy a position of antagonism, not to other Christians, but to the teaching and practice of other Christians. As human nature is constituted, theological controversy is practically impossible without the rousing of personal antagonism, and grace only par-

tially overcomes this infirmity. We are all so prone to identify ourselves with our cherished opinions! Accordingly, a Baptist church was not unnaturally looked upon in almost every community as a sort of Ishmael—its hand was against every man, and every man's hand was against it. Only those who have read the surviving religious literature of the first half of the nineteenth century know the continuous asperities of this inter-denominational controversy. The echoes of it still linger in a few religious newspapers of the southwest, but elsewhere they have so completely died away that the present generation is hardly aware that controversy was once common.

Worse in their retarding effects than these inter-denominational controversies were internal conflicts among the Baptist churches, some of which resulted in serious schisms, while all were distracting and weakening to the churches in the sections where they occurred.

The earliest of these conflicts was produced by a so-called reformation that began to be preached simultaneously in several parts of the Central West, about the year 1815. The leaders in this movement were at first independent, but after a time the separate groups, finding themselves in agreement on essential points, came together. The chief men in this reformation were Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott and Barton Stone. All were of Presbyterian antecedents (Stone perhaps more properly of Congregational), but Campbell had been for a few years identified with the Baptists of western Pennsylvania. Scott had been in the same region for a time, a teacher of a school in Pittsburgh, but his later labors were in southern Ohio, while Stone preached mainly in Kentucky and Tennessee. All these contributed about equally to the success of the movement, but Campbell by his pen made himself the most widely known and became the chief

figure in the popular idea, so that the common name of the new body was "Campbellites." They repudiate the name, and deny that they are the followers of any man, preferring to call themselves Disciples of Christ, or simply Christians. This new movement, it may be remarked in passing, began in a desire for the unity of all Christians; by the irony of fate it has ended in the adding of another denomination to the scores already existing.

All the churches of the Central and Southern West felt the effects of this attempted reformation, which set as its goal a returning to the exact order of things among the apostolic churches, and advocated this idea with an unparalleled acerbity of language. But because of Campbell's brief connection with the Baptists, and because in some respects the new reformation agreed with the ancient teaching and practice of Baptists, it had its greatest vogue among Baptist churches. The differences between the

two systems were, however, more significant than the resemblances; and, in particular, the new teaching seemed utterly to deny the fundamental Baptist doctrine that believers only should be baptized, by emptying the word "believers" of all significance. The idea was adopted from Robert Sandeman, that faith is a purely intellectual process, just belief in the facts recorded in the Scriptures, and that on such "faith" as that one is to be baptized. This was fundamentally new teaching, as Baptists maintained, and also fundamentally wrong.

There is no doubt that in the Baptist churches of that day undue stress was laid on an emotional "experience" as a test of regeneration, and that much mischief was done by this exaltation of the emotional side of religion. So far as the reformation was a protest against this, it was justified. But it was no satisfactory remedy to deny regeneration altogether, to scout everything

of the kind as occurring before baptism, to identify it practically with the "faith" already described. Still more objectionable was the teaching that in baptism was received the remission of sins, and that a Christian has no valid assurance that his sins are forgiven apart from baptism. Baptists saw in such teaching a complete nullifying of the gospel, a return to the sacramentalism against which they had always vigorously protested, a new adoption of the principle against which Paul so strenuously contended—salvation by works.

It is more than probable that each party to this hot controversy misunderstood, and by consequence misrepresented, the other's position, which greatly intensified the bitterness of the conflict. They were really less far apart than they seemed, than they both thought. But, cherishing such impressions of each other as they did, there was but one result possible, and that of course was — separation. The Baptist

churches withdrew their fellowship from those who held the doctrines of the reformation, and comparative peace ensued. The repairing of the damage so wrought was, however, a slow process, for in some regions the losses had been heavy. Several entire associations went over to the new movement, and churches by the hundreds were lost to the denomination.

This had been a western affair altogether —the churches east of the Alleghanies were scarcely affected by the reformation, and only heard the distant echoes of the controversy. But they were by no means free from troubles, especially in the New England and Middle States. One of their chief distractions was not of religious or ecclesiastical origin, but rather political, and grew out of an agitation concerning Free Masonry, which greatly stirred the region. A member of that order, named William Morgan, had published a book in which he professed to disclose the secrets and ritual

of Masonry; and, disappearing shortly afterward, under most suspicious circumstances, was generally believed to have been foully dealt with by members of the order. His abductors and alleged murderers were arrested and tried; some were convicted of minor offences and lightly punished, some escaped punishment altogether, and the whole affair was felt by a large part of the community to be a disgraceful miscarriage of justice.

For this, as well as for the original crime, the order was held responsible, and the opinion was now widely advocated and held that nobody could be a good citizen or a good Christian and be a Mason. The issue thus joined was carried into politics, and an anti-Masonic party was formed, that for a few years was powerful in several of the states, and was the decisive factor in one presidential election. It was taken into the churches, and had deplorable results. In many communities, churches of all de-

nominations would disfellowship any who persisted in retaining their membership in the distrusted order, and this feeling has not entirely died out to the present day. The loss of members in the Baptist churches was considerable, but much more serious was the loss of spiritual power consequent upon the prolonged and excited discussion of the questions involved.

While the dissensions over this matter were at their height, another trouble began to vex the churches of the same region. William Miller, a self-educated Baptist minister of considerable powers, from prolonged study of the Bible, with no apparatus but a concordance, reached the conclusion that the end of the present dispensation was close at hand. By repeated calculations he satisfied himself that 1843 was the year of doom, and in 1831 he began to make known his conclusions from press and pulpit, and exhort men to prepare for that great and awful day. Converts to

his views were rapidly made, meetings were held in churches and camps to promulgate this idea of Christ's speedy coming, and powerful revivals of religion occurred in many communities. Indeed, the error in Miller's teaching would never have won so general acceptance, if he had not been first of all a godly man and an effective preacher of the revivalist type.

The excitement grew and became intense. Many became fanatical adherents of the new teaching. The day for the ending of all things came and went, without sign or portent, and the calculations were revised and a second date selected, with precisely the same result. Now came the crisis of the movement. Many lost their faith, not only in Miller's teaching, but in all religion. He had fully persuaded them that the Bible taught his doctrine, and their whole faith was pinned to his predictions. His doctrine, his predictions, having been falsified by the event, it followed to them that the

whole Bible was false also—there was no truth anywhere. The most hopeless of all infidels were some of those who had been the victims of this fanaticism. Others, on the contrary, so far from being dismayed by the failure of the predictions, held to Miller's teaching the more firmly. They indeed ceased after a time to set dates, but they continued to teach that the coming of the Son of God in the heavens is close at hand, and is to be continually looked for. Gradually those holding these views drew apart from other churches, and formed the Second Advent body.

But the most serious, and the most general, of the controversies that beset the Baptist churches was that which arose over slavery, from the year 1831, when Garrison began publishing his "Liberator." There had always been discussion of this question, but it had never been bitter and sectional before this. The best men of the South had always looked forward to the

gradual extinction of slavery, and some had at much sacrifice manumitted their own slaves. This intemperate demand for immediate emancipation, this indictment of slavery as a sin and branding of all slaveholders as wicked, brought about a new state of public opinion, both North and South. The tendency soon was for the people of the North to become the critics and opponents of slavery, and for the Southern people to become its defenders and upholders, even to do all in their power to extend the system. The abolitionists were a minority, but they were an extremely noisy, vexatious and mischievous minority. They were, moreover, a growing minority, and that fact gave the South much uneasiness and solidified its people in the defense of slavery.

Inasmuch as this whole question was moral and religious even more than political, it could not be kept out of the pulpits and religious literature, and in a short time

every religious body in the land found itself seriously divided. The Baptist churches had no exceptional problem to solve. They shared with others the practical difficulties that always vex those who try to persuade two to walk together when they are not agreed. When their national societies were formed, the slavery question, though it existed, was causing no disquietude. The constitutions of the various societies therefore followed the precedent of the Federal Constitution, in simply accepting the existing conditions and postponing to an indefinite future the settlement of the difficult question. But now the day was fast approaching when a definite and final settlement must be had. Abraham Lincoln was not the only man who could see that the nation could not permanently continue to exist, half slave and half free—the two systems were incompatible, and one or the other must prevail, or the Union must be dissolved. Some saw and announced this

principle years before Lincoln made his famous speech, but they did not catch the ear of the people. Some began years before to make preparation for the great struggle impending. The day of compromises was fast passing away, in both State and Church; peaceful separation or armed conflict must ere long decide the question.

With the Churches, of course, peaceful separation was the foregone conclusion. This came about, among the Baptists, in consequence of the announcement by the Foreign Mission Board, in December, 1844, that they could not appoint slaveholders as missionaries. This was a denial of their equal rights in the General Convention to the Southern churches, which, however justifiable on high moral grounds, was a distinct violation of the constitution. They accordingly withdrew and in May, 1845, met at Augusta, Ga., and formed the Southern Baptist Convention. By means of various Boards, the Southern churches

conduct all their general operations through this one society, a delegated body meeting annually. The name of the old General Convention was now changed to the American Baptist Missionary Union, and its headquarters were fixed at Boston. In the same year the Southern churches also withdrew from membership in the Baptist Home Mission Society, and the division of the denomination was complete. This division has never been healed, though the old bitterness has passed away, and there is now a friendly coöperation between Northern and Southern Baptists. There is no immediate prospect of any closer union. The country is so vast, and the local interests so numerous and difficult to understand, that possibly more is accomplished by the two separate organizations than could be done through their union.

With this division of the denominational forces, a new epoch in the history of American Baptists begins. The great con-

test over slavery went on, until it culminated in the civil war, and in the throes of that conflict slavery was destroyed. The thoughts and resources of the people were mainly absorbed, during these years, in this great political and military struggle, and until victory declared itself and peace was won there was a temporary paralysis of religious activities. This was especially true of the South, which in the end was exhausted rather than defeated—less true of the North, whose superior resources kept her people from the same exhaustion. There was considerable numerical growth in both sections, even during these years of strife, and the Northern missionary enterprises were fairly maintained. But it was no time for launching new ventures, or experimenting with new policies. It was much not to lose ground in those trying years. This was the experience, not of one, but of every denomination.

When the cruel war was over, the im-

poverished South was compelled to move slowly in reestablishing its religious work, but it did move. The North, with resources little impaired, if impaired at all, was able to give its whole energies to extending and intensifying its operations. The chief characteristic of denominational life in the three decades succeeding, was the wonderful expansion of educational work: the founding of new institutions, the increase of endowments, the general growth of interest as shown by the multiplication of students in the schools of all grades.

Baptists had, indeed, before this done something for education; they had, in fact, considering their means, been devising liberal things for more than a century. While among the earlier churches there were many who were indifferent to ministerial education, some even hostile to human learning, there were plenty who were awake to the importance of having a trained

ministry. It was the desire for educated preachers—educated in surroundings not hostile to Baptist principles—that led to the founding of the first schools. The earliest of these, Hopewell Academy, perished during the Revolution. Not dismayed, the men of light and leading among the churches of that day set themselves to the work anew. The zeal of some ministers of the old Philadelphia association led to the founding of the two oldest Baptist colleges: Brown University (begun as Rhode Island college in 1764) and Columbian University (1821). This only satisfied in part the desire for schools in which Baptist Ministers could be trained; for Brown was prohibited by charter to teach theology, and the theological department of Columbian speedily proved a failure. Separate schools for theological instruction seemed to be the best practicable solution of the difficulty, as other denominations were discovering—schools not chartered by the State, but

maintained directly by the churches interested. The first strictly theological school of Baptists was established at Hamilton, N. Y., in 1817, and a second at Newton Centre, Mass., in 1825. In connection with the former, provision was made some years later for the instruction of young men who did not have the ministry in view, and out of this grew Colgate University; the latter has remained a theological school exclusively.

We cannot follow the details of this advance in education, which after 1850 became much more rapid, and from 1870 onward has outstripped the expectations of the most sanguine. In the last ten years the chief progress has been in the better endowing and equipping of institutions already existing, rather than in the founding of new schools. The matter of founding, it is now plain, has been fully done, if not overdone. We are coming to have a more adequate sense of what it means to establish

a new institution of learning. Men who are anxious to perpetuate their names by the gift of $100,000 to found a college may perhaps be as numerous as ever, but those who are ready to help them gain fame so cheaply are becoming fewer every year—not less than a million is now regarded as the sum necessary for such a beginning.

At the opening of this century American Baptists had under their control seven theological seminaries, 105 universities and colleges, and 90 academies, in which they have invested the great sum of $44,000,000, not less than half of which is productive endowment. It should be added that most of this endowment is for the benefit of the first two classes, academies being as yet very indifferently provided for. The great bulk of this property has been accumulated in these last three decades, for in 1870 the total valuation of the property did not exceed $7,000,000. Such an advance can hardly be surpassed in the annals of Chris-

tianity. And during the same period the number of students has increased from about 2,400 in 1870 to 38,000 in 1900.

But the advance in missions is only less remarkable than this educational expansion, though the full telling of this story belongs to the next chapter. Next to this, the most striking thing in recent denominational work has been the rise and progress of the young people's movement in the last two decades. This is a phenomenon common to all the churches, like the Sunday-school work in the earlier part of the century. A movement so spontaneous and general could be nothing but the response to an institution that was felt to meet a need universal, though perhaps not before understood or acknowledged. In earlier years, those received into Baptist churches, at least, were mainly adults; a generation ago, indeed, many churches would not receive into membership children of nine or ten years, doubting whether they could be

genuinely converted at so tender an age. With each decade now the tendency is for the conversion of fewer adults; more and more the converts added to our churches are children in their "teens," from the Sunday-school. What to do with these young people, how to instruct them in the Scriptures, in the history and principles and work of the denomination, how to train them for Christian service—this is the great problem that confronts the average pastor. The young people's movement, among Baptists, at any rate, is nothing else than an attempt to solve this problem.

There had been half-hearted attempts in this direction—or whole-hearted efforts, perhaps, by a few pastors—before Rev. Francis E. Clark formed his Society of Christian Endeavor at Portland, Me., in 1881, but the immediate success of that first society and the rapid multiplication of others of that type, gave a great impetus to this work and roused attention anew to its

importance. Some Baptists, however, desired an exclusively denominational society, like that which the Methodist Episcopal Church established under the name of the Epworth League. Such a thing is impossible, in the nature of things, among Baptists, where each church is perfectly free to decide for itself what form of organization its young people shall have, and where different ideas on the question of organization obtain. As a matter of fact, several different types of organization have been found, and are still found, in Baptist churches, and probably no one of them will ever succeed in getting complete possession of the field. Federation of all these societies in one general organization known as the Baptist Young People's Union of America (formed at Chicago in 1891) proved the best possible, as it was also the only possible, solution of all the difficulties. This Union has now adopted the plan of holding biennial conventions.

The close of the nineteenth century found the Baptists of the United States numbering 4,181,686 members, in a population of 74,610,523—exclusive of Alaska and our latest possessions—or one in about eighteen persons. This includes only those who are commonly intended when Baptists are mentioned, what are sometimes called "regular" Baptists. If we add the members of other bodies essentially Baptist in principles and practice, the proportion is one to every sixteen of the population. This takes account of communicants alone. If we reckon members of Baptist families, regular attendants at Baptist churches and Sunday-schools, allowing three such for every communicant, then one person in every seven or eight of the population may be called in some sense a Baptist. It is the largest Protestant denomination but one in the United States.

If we look below these statistics at the more important things, we shall discover

advance in these also. If there has not been increase in piety and zeal, these have at least been well maintained. In everything else there has been progress—in intelligence, in wealth, in liberality—until the mere increase in numbers seems on the whole the least striking feature of the century's history.

Of those bodies essentially Baptist, yet not included in the regular Baptist organization, a word should be added.

A number of these have the name Baptist in their official title. Of such are the Six Principle Baptists, similar to the same denomination in England, who originated in Rhode Island, and formed the earliest Baptist association in New England. They came to be entirely Arminian in theology, and besides this differed from other Baptists in their insistence upon the ceremony of laying hands on all persons immediately after their baptism. The Seventh-day Bap-

tists began in the same colony in 1671, and their chief distinguishing feature is clearly implied in their name. They have been active in proportion to their numbers and means in the work of education. The German Seventh-day Baptists are peculiar to Pennsylvania, and have no connection with the others. Two distinct bodies are known as Freewill Baptists. One arose in North Carolina, in 1729, and call themselves the Original Freewill Baptists. The other began in New Hampshire, in 1780, and have lately changed their official title to Free Baptists. They are strongest in New England and the Central West. A few of the Separate Baptist churches are still found in the South, and likewise a small contingent of General Baptists. About 1835 some of the Baptist churches of ultra-Calvinistic views separated from the others and called themselves Primitive or Old School Baptists, but are popularly known as "Hard Shells." Another extreme Calvinistic group is known

as Two-seed-in-the-Spirit Baptists. They are confined to a few southern states.

Several other small denominations are essentially Baptists, but do not bear that name in any form. Best known, perhaps, are the Dunkards, or Tunkers, sometimes improperly called by others German Baptists. They originated in Germany and emigrated to the colony of Pennsylvania, from 1719 onward, where their descendants are still mostly found. While peculiar in certain of their customs—for example, practicing trine instead of single immersion, and the washing of each other's feet as a religious ordinance—in all essential matters they agree with the regular Baptist churches. The Winebrennerians or Church of God, beginning in Pennsylvania about 1825, are Baptist in all but their polity, which more nearly resembles the Wesleyan. The River Brethren, probably an offshoot of the Mennonites, began in Pennsylvania as a separate body about 1750. They closely resemble

the Dunkards, with whom they are sometimes confounded.

Several other denominations—notably the Adventists, Christadelphians and Social Brethren—practice immersion of believers, without any close affinity to Baptists in other respects. All of these bodies are small, and most of them are confined to some limited area. These facts concerning them are given more as a matter of information, than because of any important bearing they are supposed to have on Baptist history, past or to come.

CHAPTER VII

BAPTIST MISSIONS

How the Providence of God led the Baptist churches of England and America to engage in the work of missions has already been told, as part of the general history. In the space at command, no further account of home missions is possible; but the work of foreign missions, in its proportions and results, is not only a subject that demands separate treatment, but it resulted in established Baptists in other parts of the world than those yet described.

It was in June, 1793, that William Carey sailed for India, with John Thomas, a surgeon who had previously been in that country and therefore knew something of the people and their language. They probably anticipated opposition and possible perse-

cution from the heathen; what they could not reasonably have expected was that their bitterest opposition would come from Englishmen who at least called themselves Christians. But so it was. The British East India Company was fully persuaded that the preaching of the gospel would make trouble among the people of India, and cause a revolt against the English power. This fear of a revolt was ever before British officialdom, and not without reason, as the event proved. But when the uprising came, in due time, it was plainly not caused by Christian missions; on the contrary, wherever Christianity had really penetrated and got a foothold, the natives remained quiet. It became plain, even to the British official, as Constantine had seen centuries before, that the Christian religion is the strongest of all conservative forces, the best ally of governments in preserving order, and a thing by all means to be encouraged instead of repressed.

But at first Carey and his followers were forbidden to remain and preach in the English possessions. They withdrew to the Danish territory, and established themselves at Serampore. Here, after a little, a missionary press was set up, and Carey began his great work of translating and printing the Scriptures in the various languages and dialects of India. Before leaving England, he had shown himself to be possessed of a marvellous faculty for the acquisition of languages. Without instruction, while laboring at his cobbler's bench, he had learned Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Dutch. Doubtless he was not a finished scholar in these languages, according to the standards of our colleges, but he could do what none of our college graduates to-day can do—read easily books in all these languages, and write in them fluently. That was how languages were learned once; now a student spends from seven to ten years in gerund-grinding, and at their close is still tied to his

dictionary and can read nothing, though he can laboriously translate, say, a page an hour into bad English. Carey learned the languages of the Orient as he had learned those of the West—mastered them, that is to say, and became one of the greatest linguists of his age, a man recognized by the learned men of Europe as an Oriental scholar of the first rank. Titles and honors were showered upon him, and were worn with a modesty as great as his learning.

His achievements would be incredible, if they were not so perfectly attested by documentary evidence that cannot be gainsaid. In his work of translation he had some assistance, but he supervised the whole, revised the contributions of others, and saw the whole through the press. In the thirty years that he thus labored, he and his fellow-workers gave the printed gospel to a third of the people then living in the world. From the Serampore press 212,000 copies of the Scriptures were issued before his

death, in forty different languages and dialects, spoken by 330,000,000 people. There is no parallel to this great work in the history of Christendom. It was moreover, no crude and hasty work, that had soon to be done over. Those versions still hold the field in India, in some cases unaltered, in others with such revisions as have been given to our own English version,—revisions that have made the text a more accurate rendering, without altering its essential nature.

For some time these Baptist missionaries were aided in the printing of these versions by the British and Foreign Bible Society. This society was formed in 1804 at the instance of the Rev. Joseph Hughes, a Baptist minister and its first secretary; and some ten or more different denominations united in organizing and supporting it. In 1835 objection was made to a proposed grant for the printing of a revision of Carey's Bengali Bible, unless "the Greek terms re-

lating to baptism be rendered, either according to the principle adopted by the translators of the authorized English version, by a word derived from the original, or by such terms as may be considered unobjectionable by other denominations composing the Bible Society." The missionaries found themselves unable to accept this alternative, either not to translate some words, or to mistranslate them in order that some might be better pleased. It was pointed out that this was laying down an entirely new rule by the society, that other versions had been printed by its aid in which *baptizo* and its cognates were rendered by vernacular words signifying to dip or immerse. All was to no purpose, and aid for printing this version was finally refused. The English Baptists therefore formed the Bible Translation Society, in 1840, to encourage the production and circulation of faithful translations of the Scriptures into foreign tongues. This society is still in existence, and in sixty

years it has printed and distributed over six million copies of the Scriptures, at a cost of $1,500,000. It has an annual income of about £1,500.

The mission of Carey, thus begun in Bengal, has been continued to the present time. Even before his death there was a complete cessation of official opposition to the work, and in later years it has been quietly aided in many ways by British civil servants in India. The mission has been extended into Northern India and Orissa. In all, 178 stations are now occupied, and the native churches contain over 7,000 members. Besides this mission, one has been established in Ceylon, where eighty-one stations are maintained; another with 346 stations is now carried on in China, and there is a mission on the Congo in Africa, with fifty-five stations. The society raises and expends about £100,000 annually.

With the decision of American Baptists to undertake the support of Mr. and Mrs.

Judson, as already related, begins the history of their foreign missions. Before they could learn of this decision, the Judsons were compelled by the hostility of the East India Company to leave Calcutta, and decided to begin a mission in Burma, where they would build on no other man's foundations, and would be without the English sphere of influence. They landed at Rangoon July 13, 1813, and here they spent two lonesome and laborious years, mostly given to acquiring the language, before they learned what the Baptists of the United States had done. Their situation was one of great peril, for from the first they were looked upon with much suspicion as possible emissaries of the English, who were believed to have designs upon Burma. The progress of the work was slow—it was not until after six years of patient effort that the first convert was baptized—and a large part of Judson's time was given to a translation of the gospels into Burmese. When war

finally broke out between Burma and the English, the missionary suffered a prolonged and painful imprisonment—not so much for religion's sake, as on suspicion still of being an English spy. As the country came more under English influence, obstacles to the preaching of the gospel vanished. Judson completed his translation of the Bible, and until very recently this was the sole version of the Scriptures circulated among the Burmese. In a few years other missionaries arrived on the field, and the Burman mission began to flourish.

It was soon discovered that among the Burmese another people were living, of very different language and characteristics, the Karens. A mission to them was begun at Tavoy in 1828, by Rev. George Dana Boardman, and they proved to be more ready to receive the gospel than the Burmese—indeed, among them some of the chief missionary triumphs of the century were won. They had a tradition that white

men would some day come and bring back their lost sacred books and teach them the true religion, and the coming of the missionaries was taken as a fulfilment of this hope. The conversion of Ko-tha-byu, the "apostle to the Karens" did much to hasten the progress of Christianity among them, and until recent years, the Karen mission was the most fruitful field of all Asiatic missions.

There was now a considerable enlarging of operations. The General Convention was well established in the confidence and affection of the churches and the zeal for missions had become general. At the meeting in 1835 the board was instructed to establish missions in every unoccupied place, where there was a reasonable prospect of success. Two years before this a movement toward a mission to the Chinese had been begun by the sending of a single missionary to Bankok, Siam. Now this mission was extended to China proper, begin-

ning with Hong Kong, in 1842, and going on to other seaport towns, as they were gradually opened by treaty to foreign residents. This was a slow process, however, and it was long before it was considered possible by any to give the gospel to the inland towns.

In pursuance of the same policy a mission was begun among the Telugus, a people then found exclusively in the southern part of Hindustan. Here there was for a long time seemingly no success nor prospect of success. No mission was ever begun and carried on for a full generation with less outward encouragement, but the missionaries never lost heart, nor faltered in their belief that a great blessing was yet in store for the Telugus. The people at home came to know this as the "Lone Star" mission, and there were repeated proposals that it be abandoned. In 1853 and again in 1855, at the annual meetings, strenuous efforts were made to procure the withdrawal of the

missionaries and the giving up of this field as hopeless. But efforts equally strenuous were made in behalf of the mission, it was reinforced, and for another twenty years the discouraging struggle went on.

Then, all at once, the fields were found to be white unto harvest, and nothing remained but to put in the sickle. There had been a long and severe famine and the missionaries had been able to provide relief for many who would otherwise have starved, through undertaking government works. It was feared that the conversions were not genuine, and hence unusual care was employed in examining and testing those who professed themselves to be followers of Jesus. In a single day in 1878, the missionaries baptized 2,222 converts, and within the year the number swelled to nearly 10,000—a small part of those who had presented themselves. The genuineness of their profession of faith was afterward shown by the great majority of

these, by their consistent Christian walk. Ever since, this has continued to be probably the most fruitful mission field in the world, the churches there now having a membership of over 55,000.

A mission to Assam was also begun in 1836, which was later extended from the Assamese proper to the hill tribes, the Nagas and Garos. The work of this mission has had little of the romantic or sensational, but it has been steady in its progress. Now 300 mission stations are occupied, and the native churches have over 6,000 members.

Besides certain European missions, to be mentioned later, these were the chief enterprises of the General Convention down to the division of the denomination. A mission was begun in Liberia in 1820, to be sure, but it was never vigorously prosecuted, and after the civil war was transferred to the Southern Convention. Missionary operations of some extent were

carried on also among the various Indian tribes of our own country, nearly a score in all, and with considerable success among the Cherokees and Shawanoes, nearly 2,000 converts having been baptized in the two tribes. This was, however, home missions rather than foreign, and the work was at length transferred to the Baptist Home Mission Society, whose work among the Indians in recent years has been most successful.

Before turning to the history of Baptist missions after the great schism of 1845, one episode growing out of the labors of this period should be related. In every new mission, one of the earliest and most important features of the work has been to give the Scriptures to the people in their own tongue. Often this has involved reducing a language to writing for the first time, the invention of an alphabet, the casting of types, and the like. Judson was obliged not only to make a translation, but

a grammar of the Burmese language, and then a dictionary; and then to turn from these philological labors to the work of a practical printer. He had to set up a press, and supervise the publication of his Bible. This he did at Moulmein, and in later years the press was transferred to Rangoon, where it has grown from a little hand-press to a large printing establishment, with a plant estimated to be worth $100,000, where all the Baptist missionary printing is done. A successful missionary must often be not only a preacher, but a good mechanic or farmer or man of affairs. It is not the men who have failed in everything at home who can be safely sent to the foreign field.

In the printing and circulating of these versions the missionaries were for a time aided by the American Bible Society, formed in New York in 1816, by representatives of various denominations, including Baptists, for "the dissemination of the

Scriptures in the received versions where they exist, and in the most faithful where they are required." In 1835 a question similar to that already noted in the British and Foreign Bible society was raised in this body also: objection was made to Judson's version and others on the ground that they translated *baptizo* and its cognates by vernacular words signifying to dip or immerse; and for the future aid was refused to missionary versions, unless they should conform in the principles of their translation to the common English version—that is transfer, instead of translate, words likely to cause controversy.

With this rule, of course, Baptists could not comply, nor could they with self-respect continue to coöperate with a society that subjected them to this exclusive rule. In April, 1837, therefore, a convention held at Philadelphia organized the American and Foreign Bible Society, which proceeded to print and circulate the ver-

sions condemned by the American Bible Society.

Had this ended the matter, there would have been few or no evil results. But some influential Baptists desired an English version of the Scriptures, in which every word should be faithfully rendered into English as now spoken, while others were strongly opposed to any revision of the King James' version, by a single denomination at all events. In June 1850, the American Bible Union was accordingly formed, "to procure and circulate the most faithful versions of the Scriptures in all languages throughout the world." A number of translations into foreign languages were printed and circulated by this society, but its English version is that by which its labors are chiefly known. Sharp controversies ensued and were long continued over the Bible work of the denomination, and they were not settled until a much later time. In May, 1883, a convention repre-

senting the whole denomination met at Saratoga, and decided that thenceforth the Bible work for the foreign field should be committed to the Missionary Union, and that for the home field to the Publication Society. This settlement gave general satisfaction, and has never since been questioned.

After the division of the denomination, the Northern Baptists did not for some time undertake any new missions, but devoted themselves to the strengthening and enlarging of work already undertaken. This was especially true of the China mission, which was now greatly extended, though for many years the returns were discouragingly meagre. When new fields were occupied it was in response to unmistakable leadings of Providence. Thus, in 1872, a mission in Japan, begun some years before by the American Baptist Free Mission Society, was offered to the Missionary Union and accepted; and since that time it has been

pushed with great vigor. Later, in 1883, a mission that had been carried on for six years on the Congo by Mr. and Mrs. Grattan Guinness, of London, was also offered to the Missionary Union, and accepted the following year. There were already seven stations, a staff of twenty-six workers, a small steamer and other valuable missionary property. There was nothing to do but vigorously prosecute the work so well begun. In 1886 a remarkable work began among the negroes and conversions multiplied, until a thousand or more had been baptized.

The great advance in all the missions is only faintly indicated by a few figures. In 1850, five years after the division, there were sixty-nine churches in the Asiatic missions, with 7,521 members. In 1900 there were 844 churches and 125,929 members. The African mission adds to these twelve churches and 1,925 members. The annual contributions of the churches for

foreign missions have advanced from $87,537 in 1850 to $626,844 in 1900.

The Southern Baptists found themselves, after the division, with no missions at all—they had abandoned their common ownership in what had hitherto been accomplished. They began in Southern China at once, with the main station at Canton, and as speedily as practicable extended their work to Central and Northern China. A mission was also begun in Liberia in 1846, and three years later the principal African mission at Yoruba was begun. No farther operations were attempted until after the civil war, which brought all work to a standstill for a decade; but in 1870 a mission was begun in Italy, which has been fairly successful. A Baptist Union was formed in 1883, which now reports fifty churches and over 1,500 members. Nearly half these results are due, however, to the aid of the English Baptist Missionary Society. In 1879 the Convention began a mission to Brazil, and

in 1889 a mission was initiated in Japan. The annual expenditures in these various missions are now over $200,000.

Missions were begun in Europe with the opening of a Baptist chapel in Paris, under the auspices of the General Convention, in 1832. In 1836 a mission was begun in Greece, and in 1870 it was attempted to establish one in Spain. Of these the French mission has been the only one to approach success—the work in Greece was long ago abandoned, while that in Spain has for some years been conducted by native pastors exclusively, and but seven small churches exist as a result of all that has been done. In France, however, there has been an encouraging growth, particularly during the past twenty years. The fifty-two churches now existing are found in many different departments, though about one-fourth of them are in and about Paris; and there are 2,300 members enrolled in twenty of these, the others not reporting.

Since 1856 there have been no American missionaries in France. The greatest lack of the churches is an educated ministry. This need has been in part supplied in past years by American aid, but until it is adequately met rapid progress is not to be expected.

There have been several other exceedingly interesting Baptist movements in Europe, which can be called Baptist missions only in a liberal extension of that term. The first of these began in Germany, through the conversion to Baptist views, by the independent study of the Scriptures, of Johann Gerhardt Oncken, at that time a colporteur and missionary of the British Continental Society. He was baptized in April, 1834, with six other believers at Hamburg, by Rev. Barnas Sears, an American Baptist then pursuing theological studies in Germany, and so the first German Baptist church was constituted. The General Convention, on learning these facts, appointed Oncken a

missionary, but no Americans were sent to that field. The work made rapid progress, in spite of many persecutions, and in a few years Baptist churches were found in all the principal towns of Germany. Associations were formed, and in 1849 the German Baptist Union was organized, with which are now affiliated eight associations, 165 churches and nearly 30,000 members in Germany alone. The associations meet annually, but the Union only once in three years. Three Commissions or Boards conduct the work: Publications, School and Finance. The Publication Board has charge of a business founded by Oncken in 1828, for many years carried on at Hamburg, but now established at Cassel. Many books are published, and several papers, including the *Wahrheitszeuge*, the organ of the denomination. The School Board supervise the Theological Seminary at Hamburg, founded in 1880, in which about thirty students each year are preparing for the ministry.

Very early in their history the German churches began missions to the surrounding countries, and there are now in consequence connected with the German Union Baptist churches in Austria-Hungary, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Roumania and Bulgaria, that have over 10,000 members. Besides these, missions have been maintained in Russia and Denmark. The Denmark Baptists have now a Union of their own, and have grown to twenty-eight churches and nearly 4,000 members. There is also a separate Russian Baptist Union, with five associations; and there are reported from that country 122 churches, with nearly 22,000 members. The Baptists of Russia have suffered greatly from the determination of the government to suppress all sects, and many of their pastors have been exiled to Siberia—sometimes, it is said, accompanied by the whole church. Nor is there any sign at present of a more tolerant policy. That there should be any growth under such

circumstances is surely a most remarkable fact.

The beginning of Baptist churches in Sweden is due to the conversion and baptism of two Swedish sailors. One, Gustaf W. Schroeder, was baptized in New York, in November, 1844, and Frederick O. Nilsson was baptized in Hamburg by Oncken in August, 1847. Nilsson gathered a church, but they were so severely persecuted that most of them emigrated to this country and established a Swedish colony in Minnesota. A successor was found in Rev. Andreas Wiberg, who had been a Lutheran minister. In 1861 Captain Schroeder returned to Sweden and built the first Baptist meeting-house at Gothenburg. Persecutions were still experienced for some time, but they gradually ceased. The churches multiplied with exceeding rapidity, until in 1900 there were 566 churches and a total membership of 41,000. The churches are organized in nineteen associations. The Bethel Seminary

was founded at Stockholm in 1886 for the instruction of their ministers, and has about forty students annually. The Swedish Baptist Mission, formed in 1889, has missionaries in Spain, China and on the Congo, besides aiding evangelists in Finland and Russia. The Baptist Home Mission, also founded in 1889, aids over fifty workers on the home field.

From Sweden the Baptists extended into Norway and Finland, the first church being constituted in Norway in 1860, while in Finland five churches were formed in 1873 as the beginning of the work there. There are now 2,700 members in the former country and 2,100 in the latter. The missionary spirit of the Swedish churches has been quite as remarkable as that of the German.

According to the best statistics obtainable, which are by no means complete, there are now in the entire world 58,000 Baptist churches, with 5,454,700 members. Adding the numbers of those already mentioned

sects that are essentially Baptist, the grand total is very nearly six millions, of whom four-fifths are found on the American continent.

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